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LETTERS

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THE USE AND EFFECT OF HISTOIC, OR

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TRANSLATED BY J. NODDER.

*Butler & Tanner,
The Selwood Printing Works,
Frome, and London.*

LETTERS
ON THE
STUDY AND USE OF HISTORY;
ON EXILE;
THE SPIRIT OF PATRIOTISM;
IDEA OF A PATRIOT KING;
STATE OF PARTIES IN 1714.

BY
HENRY ST. JOHN,
LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.



LONDON:
ALEXANDER MURRAY, 30, QUEEN SQUARE, W.C.
1870.

223. f. 75.

**A CAREFUL REPRINT OF AN EXCELLENT
WORK.—A. M.**

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

HENRY ST. JOHN, VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE, was the only son of Sir Henry St. John, of Lydiard Tregoze, Wiltshire, by Mary Rich, third daughter of the Earl of Warwick.

Henry was born at Battersea, the Surrey suburb of London, Oct. 1, 1678, and was brought up by his grandmother, under care of Daniel Burgess, a celebrated Puritan preacher.

At Eton, he became acquainted with Sir Robert Walpole, and the rivalry, began at school, continued through life. From Eton he removed to Christ Church, Oxford, where he soon became known for his personal beauty, fascination of manners, brilliancy of conversation and literary talent. He was a *fast* youth, and to reclaim him his friends brought about a match between him and the daughter and co-heiress of Sir Henry Winchescomb. The rake was not reformed—an early separation and a final one soon ensued. On the death of this lady, and during his exile in France, Bolingbroke married the widowed Marchioness de Villette, a niece of Madame Maintenon. He survived her about one year.

In 1700, Henry St. John became M.P. for Wootton Bassett; in 1704, secretary for war, resigning his office in 1707, on the dismissal of Harley; and in 1710, when Harley regained power, St. John became secretary of state. In 1712 he became Viscount Bolingbroke, but was chagrined at being refused an earldom.

On the accession of George I., Bolingbroke lost his chances of promotion. Addison was made foreign secretary, and St. John was threatened by the whigs with impeachment for high treason.

He fled in disgrace to Calais, March 25, 1715; visited the Pretender at Lorraine, and became secretary of state to the Stuart family, which caused his impeachment and attainder.

In 1723 he was permitted to return to England, his estates were restored; but the House of Lords was still closed against him. In conjunction with Wyndham and Pulteney he waged for ten years a fierce party war against Sir Robert Walpole—the *Craftsman*, a periodical of the day, being the vehicle of their bitter attacks.

In 1726 he revisited France, and remained there until the death of his father, in 1742, when he retired to his seat at Battersea, and lived there until 1751, when he died of cancer in the face. Bolingbroke was the esteemed friend of, and watched over the death-bed of Alexander Pope, the poet.

The sceptical opinions of Bolingbroke failed to support him at the last, as we read from Spence's Anecdotes, that he was overcome with terrors and excessive passion in his last illness. Sir Henry Mildmay overhearing him saying to himself, 'What will my poor soul undergo 'for all these things!' (*These sceptical opinions have no place in this Reprint.—A. M.*)

'When the passions of Bolingbroke subsided by years and dis-
'appointments, he improved his rational faculties by more grave studies
'and reflection; he shone out in his retirement with a lustre peculiar
'to himself. . . . The wisdom of Socrates, the dignity and ease of
'Pliny, and the wit of Horace appeared in all his writings.'—*Memoirs
of Dean Swift.*

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LETTERS ON THE STUDY AND USE OF HISTORY.

LETTER I. OF THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

CHANTELLOU IN TOURAIN, Nov. 6, 1735.

MY LORD,—I have considered formerly, with a good deal of attention, the subject on which you command me to communicate my thoughts to you ; and I practised in those days, as much as business and pleasure allowed me time to do, the rules that seemed to me necessary to be observed in the study of history. They were very different from those which writers on the same subject have recommended, and which are commonly practised. But I confess to your lordship that this neither gave me then, nor has given me since, any distrust of them. I do not affect singularity. On the contrary I think that a due deference is to be paid to received opinions, and that a due compliance with received customs is to be held ; though both the one and the other should be, what they often are, absurd or ridiculous. But this servitude is outward only, and abridges in no sort the liberty of private judgment. The obligations of submitting to it likewise, even outwardly, extend no further than to those opinions and customs which cannot be opposed ; or from which we cannot deviate without doing hurt, or giving offence, to society. In all these cases, our speculations ought to be free : in all other cases, our practice may be so. Without any regard therefore to the opinion and practice even of the learned world, I am very willing to tell you mine. But as it is hard to recover a thread of thought long ago laid aside, and impossible to prove some things and explain others, without the assistance of many books which I have not here, your lordship must be content with such an imperfect sketch as I am able to send you in this letter.

The motives that carry men to the study of history are different. Some intend, if such as they may be said to study, nothing more than amusement, and read the life of Aristides or Phocion, of Epaminondas

or Scipio, Alexander or Cæsar, just as they play a game at cards, or as they would read the story of the seven champions.

Others there are whose motive to this study is nothing better, and who have the further disadvantage of becoming a nuisance very often to society, in proportion to the progress they make. The former do not improve their reading to any good purpose : the latter pervert it to a very bad one, and grow in impertinence as they increase in learning. I think I have known most of the first kind in England, and most of the last in France. The persons I mean are those who read to talk, to shine in conversation, and to impose in company : who, having few ideas to vend of their own growth, store their minds with crude unruminated facts and sentences ; and hope to supply, by bare memory, the want of imagination and judgment.

But these are in the two lowest forms. The next I shall mention are in one a little higher ; in the form of those who grow neither wiser nor better by study themselves, but who enable others to study with greater ease, and to purposes more useful : who make fair copies of foul manuscripts, give the signification of hard words, and take a great deal of other grammatical pains. The obligation to these men would be great indeed, if they were in general able to do anything better, and submitted to this drudgery for the sake of the public ; as some of them, it must be owned with gratitude, have done, but not later, I think, than about the time of the resurrection of letters. When works of importance are pressing, generals themselves may take up the pickaxe and the spade ; but in the ordinary course of things, when that pressing necessity is over, such tools are left in the hands destined to use them, the hands of common soldiers and peasants. I approve therefore very much the devotion of a studious man at Christ Church, who was overheard in his oratory entering into a detail with God, acknowledging the divine goodness in furnishing the world with makers of dictionaries ! These men court fame, as well as their betters, by such means as God has given them to acquire it : and Littleton exerted all the genius he had when he made a dictionary, though Stephens did not. They deserve encouragement, however, whilst they continue to compile, and neither affect wit, nor presume to reason.

There is a fourth class, of much less use than these, but of much greater name. Men of the first rank in learning, and to whom the whole tribe of scholars bow with reverence. A man must be as indifferent as I am to common censure or approbation, to avow a thorough contempt for the whole business of these learned lives ; for all the researches into antiquity, for all the systems of chronology and history, that we owe to the immense labours of a Scaliger, a Bochart, a Petavius, an Usher, and even a Marsham. The same materials are common to them all ; but these materials are few, and there is a moral impossibility that they should ever have more. They have combined

these into every form that can be given to them : they have supposed, they have guessed, they have joined disjointed passages of different authors, and broken traditions of uncertain originals, of various people, and of centuries remote from one another as well as from ours. In short, that they might leave no liberty untaken, even a wild fantastical similitude of sounds has served to prop up a system. As the materials they have are few, so are the very best and such as pass for authentic extremely precarious, as learned persons themselves confess.

Julius Africanus, Eusebius, and George the monk, opened the principal sources of all this science ; but they corrupted the waters. Their point of view was to make profane history and chronology agree with sacred. For this purpose, the ancient monuments that these writers conveyed to posterity, were digested by them according to the system they were to maintain ; and none of these monuments were delivered down in their original form and genuine purity. The dynasties of Manetho, for instance, are broken to pieces by Eusebius, and such fragments of them as suited his design are stuck into his work. We have, we know, no more of them. The Codex Alexandrinus we owe to George the monk. We have no other authority for it : and one cannot see without amazement such a man as Sir John Marsham undervaluing this authority in one page, and building his system upon it in the next. He seems even by the lightness of his expressions, if I remember well, for it is long since I looked into his canon, not to be much concerned what foundation his system had, so he showed his skill in forming one, and in reducing the immense antiquity of the Egyptians within the limits of the Hebraic calculation. In short, my lord, all these systems are so many enchanted castles : they appear to be something, they are nothing but appearances ; like them too, dissolve the charm, and they vanish from the sight. To dissolve the charm, we must begin at the beginning of them : the expression may be odd, but it is significant. We must examine scrupulously and indifferently the foundations on which they lean : and when we find these either faintly probable, or grossly improbable, it would be foolish to expect anything better in the superstructure. This science is one of those that are a limine salutandæ. To do thus much may be necessary, that grave authority may not impose on our ignorance : to do more, would be to assist this very authority in imposing false science upon us. I had rather take the Darius whom Alexander conquered for the son of Hystaspes, and make as many anachronisms as a Jewish chronologer, than sacrifice half my life to collect all the learned lumber that fills the head of an antiquary.

LETTER II.

ON THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

Concerning the true use and advantages of it.

LET me say something of history in general, before I descend into the consideration of particular parts of it, or of the various methods of study, or of the different views of those that apply themselves to it, as I had begun to do in my former letter.

The love of history seems inseparable from human nature, because it seems inseparable from self-love. The same principle in this instance carries us forward and backward, to future and to past ages. We imagine that the things which affect us, must affect posterity: this sentiment runs through mankind, from Cæsar down to the parish clerk in Pope's miscellany. We are fond of preserving, as far as it is in our frail power, the memory of our own adventures, of those of our own time, and of those that preceded it. Rude heaps of stones have been raised, and ruder hymns have been composed, for this purpose, by nations who had not yet the use of arts and letters. To go no further back, the triumphs of Odin were celebrated in runic songs, and the feasts of our British ancestors were recorded in those of their bards. The savages of America have the same custom at this day; and long historical ballads of their huntings and their wars are sung at all their festivals. There is no need of saying how this passion grows among civilized nations, in proportion to the means of gratifying it; but let us observe that the same principle of nature directs us as strongly, and more generally as well as more early, to indulge our own curiosity, instead of preparing to gratify that of others. The child harkens with delight to the tales of his nurse, he learns to read, and he devours with eagerness fabulous legends and novels. In riper years he applies himself to history, or to that which he takes for history,—to authorized romance; and even in age, the desire of knowing what has happened to other men, yields to the desire alone of relating what has happened to ourselves. Thus history, true or false, speaks to our passions always. What pity is it, my lord, that even the best should speak to our understandings so seldom? That it does so, we have none to blame but ourselves. Nature has done her part. She has opened this study to every man who can read and think; and what she has made the most agreeable, reason can make the most useful, application of our minds. But if we consult our reason, we shall be far from following the examples of our fellow-creatures, in this as in most other cases, who are so proud of being rational. We shall neither read to soothe our indolence, nor to gratify our vanity: as little shall we content ourselves to drudge like grammarians and critics, that others may

be able to study, with greater ease and profit, like philosophers and statesmen : as little shall we affect the slender merit of becoming great scholars at the expense of groping all our lives in the dark mazes of antiquity. All these mistake the true drift of study, and the true use of history. Nature gave us curiosity to excite the industry of our minds ; but she never intended it should be made the principal, much less the sole, object of their application. The true and proper object of this application, is a constant improvement in private and in public virtue. An application to any study that tends neither directly nor indirectly to make us better men and better citizens, is at best but a specious and ingenious sort of idleness, to use an expression of Tillotson ; and the knowledge we acquire by it is a creditable kind of ignorance, nothing more. This creditable kind of ignorance is, in my opinion, the whole benefit which the generality of men, even of the most learned, reap from the study of history ; and yet the study of history seems to me, of all other, the most proper to train us up to private and public virtue.

Your lordship may very well be ready by this time, and after so much bold censure on my part, to ask me what then is the true use of history ? in what respects it may serve to make us better and wiser ? and what method is to be pursued in the study of it, for attaining these great ends ? I will answer you by quoting what I have read somewhere or other in Dionysius Halicarn. I think that history is philosophy teaching by examples. We need but to cast our eyes on the world, and we shall see the daily force of example : we need but to turn them inward, and we shall soon discover why example has this force. ‘*Pauci prudenter dantia*,’ says Tacitus, ‘*honesta ab deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis discernunt* : plures aliorum eventis docentur.’ Such is the imperfection of human understanding, such the frail temper of our minds, that abstract or general propositions, though never so true, appear obscure or doubtful to us very often, till they are explained by examples ; and that the wisest lessons in favour of virtue go but a little way to convince the judgment, and determine the will, unless they are enforced by the same means, and we are obliged to apply to ourselves what we see happen to other men. Instructions by precept have the further disadvantage of coming on the authority of others, and frequently require a long deduction of reasoning. ‘*Homines amplius oculis quam auribus credunt* : longum iter est per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla.’ The reason of this judgment, which I quote from one of Seneca’s epistles in confirmation of my own opinion, rests I think on this : that when examples are pointed out to us, there is a kind of appeal, with which we are flattered, made to our senses, as well as our understandings. The instruction comes then upon our own authority : we frame the precept after our own experience, and yield to fact when we resist speculation. But this is not the only advantage of instruction by ex-

ample; for example appeals not to our understanding alone, but to our passions likewise. Example assuages these, or animates them; sets passion on the side of judgment, and makes the whole man of a piece, which is more than the strongest reasoning and the clearest demonstration can do: and thus forming habits by repetition, example secures the observance of those precepts which example insinuated. Is it not Pliny, my lord, who says, that the gentlest, he should have added the most effectual, way of commanding, is by example? ‘*Mitius ‘jubetur exemplo.*’ The harshest orders are softened by example, and tyranny itself becomes persuasive. What pity it is that so few princes have learned this way of commanding! But again; the force of examples is not confined to those alone that pass immediately under our sight: the examples that memory suggests have the same effect in their degree, and a habit of recalling them will soon produce the habit of imitating them. In the same epistle from whence I cited a passage just now, Seneca says that Cleanthes had never become so perfect a copy of Zeno, if he had not passed his life with him; that Plato, Aristotle, and the other philosophers of that school, profited more by the example, than by the discourse of Socrates. [But here by the way Seneca mistook; for Socrates died two years according to some, and four years according to others, before the birth of Aristotle, and his mistake might come from the inaccuracy of those who collected for him; as Erasmus observes, after Quintilian, in his judgment on Seneca.] But be this, which was scarce worth a parenthesis, as it will; he adds that Metrodorus, Hermachus, and Polyænus, men of great note, were formed by living under the same roof with Epicurus, not by frequenting his school. These are instances of the force of immediate example. But your lordship knows that the citizens of Rome placed the images of their ancestors in the vestibules of their houses; so that whenever they went in or out, these venerable bustoes met their eyes, and recalled the glorious actions of the dead, to fire the living, to excite them to imitate and even to emulate their great forefathers. The success answered the design. The virtue of one generation was transfused by the magic of example into several; and a spirit of heroism was maintained through many ages of that commonwealth. Now these are so many instances of the force of remote example, and from all these instances we may conclude that examples of both kinds are necessary.

The school of example, my lord, is the world; and the masters of this school are history and experience. I am far from contending that the former is preferable to the latter. I think upon the whole otherwise: but this I say, that the former is absolutely necessary to prepare us for the latter, and to accompany us whilst we are under the discipline of the latter, that is, through the whole course of our lives. No doubt some few men may be quoted, to whom nature gave what art

and industry can give to no man. But such examples will prove nothing against me, because I admit that the study of history without experience is insufficient, but assert that experience itself is so without genius. Genius is preferable to the other two, but I would wish to find the three together : for how great soever a genius may be, and how much soever he may acquire new light and heat as he proceeds in his rapid course, certain it is that he will never shine with the full lustre, nor shed the full influence he is capable of, unless to his own experience he adds the experience of other men and other ages. Genius, without the improvement at least of experience, is what comets once were thought to be, a blazing meteor, irregular in his course, and dangerous in his approach ; of no use to any system, and able to destroy any. Mere sons of earth, if they have experience without any knowledge of the history of the world, are but half scholars in the science of mankind. And if they are conversant in history without experience, they are worse than ignorant : they are pedants, always incapable, sometimes meddling and presuming. The man, who has all three, is an honour to his country, and a public blessing : and such I trust your lordship will be in this century, as your great-grandfather (Earl of Clarendon.) was in the last.

I have insisted a little the longer on this head, and have made these distinctions the rather, because, though I attribute a great deal more than many will be ready to allow to the study of history, yet I would not willingly even seem to fall into the ridicule of ascribing to it such extravagant effects as several have done, from Tully down to Casaubon, La Mothe le Vayer, and other modern pedants. When Tully informs us in the second book of his Tusculan disputationes, that the first Scipio Africanus had always in his hands the works of Xenophon, he advances nothing but what is probable and reasonable. To say nothing of the retreat of the ten thousand, nor of other parts of Xenophon's writings, the images of virtue represented in that admirable picture, the Cyropaedia, were proper to entertain a soul that was fraught with virtue, and Cyrus was worthy to be imitated by Scipio. So Selim emulated Cæsar, whose commentaries were translated for his use against the customs of the Turks ; so Cæsar emulated Alexander, and Alexander Achilles. There is nothing ridiculous here, except the use that is made of this passage by those who quote it. But what the same Tully says in the fourth book of his academical disputationes, concerning Lucullus, seems to me very extraordinary. 'In Asiam factus imperator venit; cum esset Româ proiectus rei militaris rudis;' (one would be ready to ascribe so sudden a change, and so vast an improvement, to nothing less than knowledge infused by inspiration, if we were not assured in the same place that they were effected by very natural means, by such as it is in every man's power to employ) 'partim percontando à peritis, partim in rebus gestis

'legendis.' Lucullus, according to this account, verified the reproach on the Roman nobility, which Salust puts into the mouth of Marius. But as I discover the passion of Marius, and his prejudices to the patricians in one case; so I discover, methinks, the cunning of Tully, and his partiality to himself in the other. Lucullus, after he had been chosen consul, obtained by intrigue the government of Cilicia, and so put himself into a situation of commanding the Roman army against Mithridates: Tully had the same government afterwards, and though he had no Mithridates nor any other enemy of consequence opposed to him, though all his military feats consisted in surprising and pillaging a parcel of highlanders and wild Cilicians, yet he assumed the airs of a conqueror, and described his actions in so pompous a style, that the account becomes burlesque. He laughs indeed in one of his letters to Atticus at his generalship; but if we turn to those he writ to Cœlius Rufus and to Cato upon this occasion, or to those wherein he expresses to Atticus his resentment against Cato, for not proposing in his favour the honours usually decreed to conquerors, we may see how vanity turned his head, and how impudently he insisted on obtaining a triumph. Is it any strain now to suppose that he meant to insinuate in the passage I have quoted about Lucullus, that the difference between him and the former governor of Cilicia, even in military merit, arose from the different conjuncture alone? and that Lucullus could not have done in Cilicia at that time more than he himself did? Cicero had read and questioned at least as much as Lucullus, and would therefore have appeared as great a captain, if he had had as great a prince as Mithridates to encounter. But the truth is, that Lucullus was made a great captain by theory or the study of history alone, no more than Ferdinand of Spain and Alphonsus of Naples were cured of desperate distempers by reading Livy and Quintus Curtius: a silly tale which Bodin, Amyot, and others have picked up and propagated. Lucullus had served in his youth against the Marsi, probably in other wars, and Sylla took early notice of him; he went into the east with this general, and had a great share in his confidence. He commanded in several expeditions. It was he who restored the Colophonians to their liberty, and who punished the revolt of the people of Mytelene. Thus we see that Lucullus was formed by experience as well as study, and by an experience gained in those very countries, where he gathered so many laurels afterwards in fighting against the same enemy. The late Duke of Marlborough never read Xenophon most certainly, nor the relation perhaps of any modern wars; but he served in his youth under Monsieur de Turenne, and I have heard that he was taken notice of in those early days by that great man. He afterwards commanded in an expedition to Ireland, served a campaign or two, if I mistake not, under King William in Flanders; and, besides these occasions, had none of gaining experience in war, till he came to the

head of our armies in 1702, and triumphed, not over Asiatic troops, but over the veteran armies of France. The Roman had on his side genius and experience cultivated by study : the Briton had genius improved by experience, and no more. The first therefore is not an example of what study can do alone ; but the latter is an example of what genius and experience can do without study. They can do much, to be sure, when the first is given in a superior degree. But such examples are very rare ; and when they happen, it will be still true, that they would have had fewer blemishes, and would have come nearer to the perfection of private and public virtue, in all the arts of peace and achievements of war, if the views of such men had been enlarged, and their sentiments ennobled, by acquiring that cast of thought and that temper of mind, which will grow up and become habitual in every man who applies himself early to the study of history as the study of philosophy, with the intention of being wiser and better, without the affectation of being more learned.

The temper of the mind is formed, and a certain turn given to our ways of thinking,—in a word, the seeds of that moral character which cannot wholly alter the natural character, but may correct the evil and improve the good that is in it, or do the very contrary, or sow betimes,—much sooner than is commonly supposed. It is equally certain, that we shall gather or not gather experience, be the better or the worse for this experience, when we come into the world and mingle amongst mankind, according to the temper of mind, and the turn of thought, that we have acquired beforehand, and bring along with us. They will tincture all our future acquisitions, so that the very same experience, which secures the judgment of one man or excites him to virtue, shall lead another into error, or plunge him into vice. From hence it follows, that the study of history has in this respect a double advantage. If experience alone can make us perfect in our parts, experience cannot begin to teach them till we are actually on the stage ; whereas by a previous application to this study, we conn them over at least before we appear there : we are not quite unprepared, we learn our parts sooner, and we learn them better.

Let me explain what I mean by an example. There is scarce any folly or vice more epidemical among the sons of men, than that ridiculous and hurtful vanity by which the people of each country are apt to prefer themselves to those of every other, and to make their own customs and manners and opinions the standards of right and wrong, of true and false. The Chinese mandarins were strangely surprised, and almost incredulous, when the Jesuits showed them how small a figure their empire made in the general map of the world. The Samojedes wondered much at the czar of Muscovy for not living among them ; and the Hottentot, who returned from Europe, stripped himself naked as soon as he came home, and put on his bracelets of guts and

garbage. Now nothing can contribute more to prevent us from being tainted with this vanity, than to accustom ourselves early to contemplate the different nations of the earth in that vast map which history spreads before us, in their rise and their fall, in their barbarous and civilized states, in the likeness and unlikeness of them all to one another, and of each to itself. By frequently renewing this prospect to the mind, the Mexican with his cap and coat of feathers, sacrificing a human victim to his god, will not appear more savage to our eyes, than the Spaniard with a hat on his head, and a gonilla round his neck, sacrificing whole nations to his ambition, his avarice, and even the wantonness of his cruelty. I might show, by a multitude of other examples, how history prepares us for experience, and guides us in it ; and many of these would be both curious and important. I might likewise bring several other instances, wherein history serves to purge the mind of those national partialities and prejudices that we are apt to contract in our education, and that experience for the most part rather confirms than removes, because it is for the most part confined, like our education. But I apprehend growing too prolix, and shall therefore conclude this head by observing, that though an early and proper application to the study of history will contribute extremely to keep our minds free from a ridiculous partiality in favour of our own country, and a vicious prejudice against others ; yet the same study will create in us a preference of affection to our own country. There is a story told of Abgarus. He brought several beasts taken in different places to Rome, they say, and let them loose before Augustus : every beast ran immediately to that part of the circus where a parcel of earth taken from his native soil had been laid. ‘Credat Judæus Apella.’ This tale might pass on Josephus ; for in him I believe I read it ; but surely the love of our country is a lesson of reason, not an institution of nature. Education and habit, obligation and interest, attach us to it, not instinct. It is however so necessary to be cultivated, and the prosperity of all societies, as well as the grandeur of some, depends upon it so much, that orators by their eloquence, and poets by their enthusiasm, have endeavoured to work up this precept of morality into a principle of passion. But the examples which we find in history, improved by the lively descriptions and the just applauses or censures of historians, will have a much better and more permanent effect than declamation, or song, or the dry ethics of mere philosophy. In fine, to converse with historians is to keep good company : many of them were excellent men, and those who were not such have taken care however to appear such in their writings. It must be therefore of great use to prepare ourselves by this conversation for that of the world ; and to receive our first impressions, and to acquire our first habits, in a scene where images of virtue and vice are continually represented to us in the colours that belong properly to them, before we enter on another scene, where

virtue and vice are too often confounded, and what belongs to one is ascribed to the other.

Besides the advantage of beginning our acquaintance with mankind sooner, and of bringing with us into the world, and the business of it, such a cast of thought and such a temper of mind, as will enable us to make a better use of our experience, there is this farther advantage in the study of history,—that the improvement we make by it extends to more objects, and is made at the expense of other men; whereas that improvement, which is the effect of our own experience, is confined to fewer objects, and is made at our own expense. To state the account fairly therefore between these two improvements; though the latter be the more valuable, yet allowance being made on one side for the much greater number of examples that history presents to us, and deduction being made on the other of the price we often pay for our experience, the value of the former will rise in proportion. ‘I have recorded these things,’ says Polybius, after giving an account of the defeat of Regulus, ‘that they who read these commentaries may be rendered better by them; for all men have two ways of improvement, one arising from their own experience, and one from the experience of others.’ ‘Evidentior quidem illa est, quæ per propria dicit infortunia; at tutior illa quæ per aliena.’ I use Casaubon’s translation. Polybius goes on, and concludes, ‘that since the first of these ways exposes us to great labour and peril, whilst the second works the same good effect, and is attended by no evil circumstance, every one ought to take for granted, that the study of history is the best school where he can learn how to conduct himself in all the situations of life.’ Regulus had seen at Rome many examples of magnanimity, of frugality, of the contempt of riches, and of other virtues; and these virtues he practised. But he had not learned, nor had opportunity of learning another lesson, which the examples recorded in history inculcate frequently, the lesson of moderation. An insatiable thirst of military fame, an unconfined ambition of extending their empire, an extravagant confidence in their own courage and force, an insolent contempt of their enemies, and an impetuous overbearing spirit with which they pursued all their enterprises, composed in his days the distinguishing character of a Roman. Whatever the senate and people resolved, appeared to the members of that commonwealth both practicable and just. Neither difficulties nor dangers could check them; and their sages had not yet discovered that virtues in excess degenerate into vices. Notwithstanding the beautiful rant which Horace puts into his mouth, I make no doubt that Regulus learned at Carthage those lessons of moderation which he had not learned at Rome; but he learned them by experience, and the fruits of this experience came too late, and cost too dear; for they cost the total defeat of the Roman army, the prolongation of a calamitous war which might have been finished by a glorious peace, the loss of liberty to

thousands of Roman citizens, and to Regulus himself the loss of life in the midst of torments, if we are entirely to credit what is perhaps exaggeration in the Roman authors.

There is another advantage worthy our observation that belongs to the study of history ; and that I shall mention here, not only because of the importance of it, but because it leads me immediately to speak of the nature of the improvement we ought to have in our view, and of the method in which it seems to me that this improvement ought to be pursued : two particulars from which your lordship may think perhaps that I digress too long. The advantage I mean consists in this, that the examples which history presents to us, both of men and of events, are generally complete: the whole example is before us, and consequently the whole lesson, or sometimes the various lessons which philosophy proposes to teach us by this example. For first, as to men ; we see them at their whole length in history, and we see them generally there through a medium less partial at least than that of experience : for I imagine, that a whig or a tory, whilst those parties subsisted, would have condemned in Saturninus the spirit of faction which he applauded in his own tribunes, and would have applauded in Drusus the spirit of moderation which he despised in those of the contrary party, and which he suspected and hated in those of his own party. The villain who has imposed on mankind by his power or cunning, and whom experience could not unmask for a time, is unmasks at length ; and the honest man, who has been misunderstood or defamed, is justified before his story ends. Or if this does not happen, if the villain dies with his mask on, in the midst of applause and honour and wealth and power, and if the honest man dies under the same load of calumny and disgrace under which he lived, driven perhaps into exile and exposed to want ; yet we see historical justice executed, the name of one branded with infamy, and that of the other celebrated with panegyric to succeeding ages. ‘*Praecipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes sileantur; utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit.*’ Thus according to Tacitus, and according to truth, from which his judgments seldom deviate, the principal duty of history is to erect a tribunal, like that among the Egyptians, mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, where men and princes themselves were tried, and condemned or acquitted, after their deaths ; where those who had not been punished for their crimes, and those who had not been honoured for their virtues, received a just retribution. The sentence is pronounced in one case, as it was in the other, too late to correct or recompense ; but it is pronounced in time to render these examples of general instruction to mankind. Thus Cicero, that I may quote one instance out of thousands, and that I may do justice to the general character of that great man whose particular failing I have censured so freely ; Cicero, I say, was abandoned by Octavius, and massacred by Anthony. But let any

man read this fragment of Arellius Fuscus, and choose which he would wish to have been, the orator, or the triumvir? ‘Quoad humanum genus incolume manserit, quamdiu usus litteris, honor summae eloquentiae pretium erit, quamdiu rerum natura aut fortuna steterit, aut memoria duraverit, admirabile posteris vigebis ingenium, et uno proscriptus seculo, proscribes Antonium omnibus.’

Thus again as to events that stand recorded in history: we see them all, we see them as they followed one another, or as they produced one another, causes or effects, immediate or remote. We are cast back, as it were, into former ages: we live with the men who lived before us, and we inhabit countries that we never saw. Place is enlarged, and time prolonged, in this manner; so that the man who applies himself early to the study of history, may acquire in a few years, and before he sets his foot abroad in the world, not only a more extended knowledge of mankind, but the experience of more centuries than any of the patriarchs saw. The events we are witnesses of, in the course of the longest life, appear to us very often original, unprepared, single, and un-relative, if I may use such an expression for want of a better in English; in French I would say *isolés*: they appear such very often, are called accidents, and looked upon as the effects of chance; a word, by the way, which is in constant use, and has no determinate meaning. We get over the present difficulty, we improve the momentary advantage, as well as we can, and we look no farther. Experience can carry us no farther; for experience can go a very little way back in discovering causes, and effects are not the objects of experience till they happen. From hence many errors in judgment, and by consequence in conduct, necessarily arise. And here too lies the difference we are speaking of between history and experience. The advantage on the side of the former is double. In ancient history, as we have said already, the examples are complete, which are incomplete in the course of experience. The beginning, the progression, and the end appear, not of particular reigns, much less of particular enterprises, or systems of policy alone, but of governments, of nations, of empires, and of all the various systems that have succeeded one another in the course of their duration. In modern history, the examples may be, and sometimes are, incomplete; but they have this advantage when they are so, that they serve to render complete the examples of our own time. Experience is doubly defective; we are born too late to see the beginning, and we die too soon to see the end of many things. History supplies both these defects. Modern history shows the causes, when experience presents the effects alone; and ancient history enables us to guess at the effects, when experience presents the causes alone. Let me explain my meaning by two examples of these kinds; one past, the other actually present.

When the revolution of 1688 happened, few men then alive, I sup-

pose, went farther in their search after the causes of it, than the extravagant attempt of King James against the religion and liberty of his people. His former conduct and the passages of King Charles II.'s reign might rankle still at the hearts of some men, but could not be set to account among the causes of his deposition ; since he had succeeded, notwithstanding them, peaceably to the throne, and the nation in general, even many of those who would have excluded him from it, were desirous or at least willing, that he should continue in it. Now this example thus stated affords, no doubt, much good instruction to the kings and people of Britain. But this instruction is not entire, because the example thus stated, and confined to the experience of that age, is imperfect. King James's mal-administration rendered a revolution necessary and practicable ; but his mal-administration, as well as all his preceding conduct, was caused by his bigot attachment to popery and to the principles of arbitrary government, from which no warning could divert him. His bigot attachment to these was caused by the exile of the royal family ; this exile was caused by the usurpation of Cromwell ; and Cromwell's usurpation was the effect of a former rebellion, begun not without reason on account of liberty; but without any valid pretence on account of religion. During this exile, our princes caught the taint of popery and foreign politics. We made them unfit to govern us, and after that were forced to recall them that they might rescue us out of anarchy. It was necessary therefore, your lordship sees, at the revolution, and it is more so now, to go back in history, at least as far as I have mentioned, and perhaps farther, even to the beginning of the reign of James I., to render this event a complete example, and to develope all the wise, honest, and salutary precepts with which it is pregnant, both to king and subject.

The other example shall be taken from what has succeeded the revolution. Few men at that time looked forward enough to foresee the necessary consequences of the new constitution of the revenue that was soon afterwards formed, nor of the method of funding that immediately took place ; which, absurd as they are, have continued ever since, till it is become scarce possible to alter them. Few people, I say, foresaw how the creation of funds, and the multiplication of taxes, would increase yearly the power of the crown, and bring our liberties, by a natural and necessary progression, into more real, though less apparent danger, than they were in before the revolution. The excessive ill husbandry practised from the very beginning of King William's reign, and which laid the foundations of all we feel and all we fear, was not the effect of ignorance, mistake, or what we call chance, but of design and scheme in those who had the sway at that time. I am not so uncharitable however as to believe that they intended to bring upon their country all the mischiefs that we, who came after them, experience and apprehend. No ; they saw the

measures they took singly, and unrelatively, or relatively alone to some immediate object. The notion of attaching men to the new government, by tempting them to embark their fortunes on the same bottom, was a reason of state to some ; the notion of creating a new, that is, a moneyed interest, in opposition to the landed interest or as a balance to it, and of acquiring a superior influence in the city of London at least by the establishment of great corporations, was a reason of party to others ; and I make no doubt that the opportunity of amassing immense estates by the management of funds, by trafficking in paper, and by all the arts of jobbing, was a reason of private interest to those who supported and improved this scheme of iniquity, if not to those who devised it. They looked no farther. Nay, we who came after them, and have long tasted the bitter fruits of the corruption they planted, were far from taking such an alarm at our distress and our danger as they deserved ; till the most remote and fatal effect of causes, laid by the last generation, was very near becoming an object of experience in this. Your lordship, I am sure, sees at once how much a due reflection on the passages of former times, as they stand recorded in the history of our own, and of other countries, would have deterred a free people from trusting the sole management of so great a revenue, and the sole nomination of those legions of officers employed in it, to their chief magistrate. There remained indeed no pretence for doing so, when once a salary was settled on the prince, and the public revenue was no longer in any sense his revenue, nor the public expense his expense. Give me leave to add, that it would have been, and would be still, more decent with regard to the prince, and less repugnant if not more conformable to the principles and practice too of our government, to take this power from the prince, or to share it with him ; than to exclude men from the privilege of representing their fellow subjects who would choose them in parliament, purely because they are employed and trusted by the prince.

Your lordship sees not only how much a due reflection upon the experience of other ages and countries would have pointed out national corruption as the natural and necessary consequence of investing the crown with the management of so great a revenue, but also the loss of liberty as the natural and necessary consequence of national corruption.

These two examples explain sufficiently what they are intended to explain. It only remains therefore upon this head, to observe the difference between the two manners in which history supplies the defects of our own experience. It shows us causes as in fact they were laid, with their immediate effects, and it enables us to guess at future events. It can do no more in the nature of things. My Lord Bacon, in his second book of the advancement of learning, having in his mind I suppose what Philo and Josephus asserted of Moses,

affirms Divine history to have this prerogative, that the narration may be before the fact as well as after. But since the ages of prophecy, as well as miracles, are past, we must content ourselves to guess at what will be, by what has been ; we have no other means in our power, and history furnishes us with these. How we are to improve and apply these means, as well as how we are to acquire them, shall be deduced more particularly in another letter.

LETTER III ON THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

I. *Objection against the utility of history removed.—II. The false and true aims of those who study it.—III. History of the first ages, with reflections on the state of ancient profane history.*

Were these letters to fall into the hands of some ingenious persons who adorn the age we live in, your lordship's correspondent would be joked upon for his project of improving men in virtue and wisdom by the study of history. The general characters of men, it would be said, are determined by their natural constitutions, as their particular actions are by immediate objects. Many very conversant in history would be elated, who have proved ill men, or bad politicians ; and a long roll would be produced of others who have arrived at a great pitch of private and public virtue, without any assistance of this kind. Something

- has been said already to anticipate this objection ; but since I have heard several persons affirm such propositions with great confidence, a loud laugh, or a silent sneer at the pedants who presumed to think otherwise, I will spend a few paragraphs, with your lordship's leave, to show that such affirmations (for to affirm amongst these fine men is to reason) either prove too much, or prove nothing.

If our general characters were determined absolutely, as they are certainly influenced, by our constitutions, and if our particular actions were so by immediate objects ; all instruction by precept as well as example, and all endeavours to form the moral character by education, would be unnecessary. Even the little care that is taken, and surely it is impossible to take less, in the training up our youth, would be too much. But the truth is widely different from this representation of it ; for what is vice, and what is virtue ? I speak of them in a large and philosophical sense. The former is, I think, no more than the excess, abuse, and misapplication of appetites, desires, and passions, natural and innocent, nay useful and necessary. The latter consists in the moderation and government, in the use and application of these app-

tites, desires, and passions, according to the rules of reason, and therefore often in opposition to their own blind impulse.

What now is education ? that part, that principal and most neglected part of it, I mean, which tends to form the moral character ? It is, I think, an institution designed to lead men from their tender years, by precept and example, by argument and authority, to the practice and to the habit of practising these rules. The stronger our appetites, desires, and passions are, the harder indeed is the task of education ; but when the efforts of education are proportioned to this strength, although our keenest appetites and desires, and our ruling passions cannot be reduced to a quiet and uniform submission, yet are not their excesses assuaged ? are not their abuses and misapplications, in some degree, diverted or checked ? Though the pilot cannot lay the storm, cannot he carry the ship by his art better through it, and often prevent the wreck that would always happen without him ? If Alexander, who loved wine, and was naturally choleric, had been bred under the severity of Roman discipline, it is probable he would neither have made a bonfire of Persepolis for his whore, nor have killed his friend. If Scipio, who was naturally given to women, for which anecdote we have, if I mistake not, the authority of Polybius, as well as some verses of Naevius preserved by A. Gellius, had been educated by Olympias at the court of Philip, it is improbable that he would have restored the beautiful Spaniard. In short, if the renowned Socrates had not corrected nature by art, this first apostle of the Gentiles had been a very profligate fellow by his own confession ; for he was inclined to all the vices Zopyrus imputed to him, as they say, on the observation of his physiognomy.

With him, therefore, who denies the effects of education, it would be in vain to dispute ; and with him who admits them, there can be no dispute concerning that share which I ascribe to the study of history, in forming our moral characters, and making us better men. The very persons who pretend that inclinations cannot be restrained, nor habits corrected, against our natural bent, would be the first perhaps to prove in certain cases the contrary. A fortune at court, or the favours of a lady, have prevailed on many to conceal, and they could not conceal without restraining, which is one step towards correcting, the vices they were by nature addicted to the most. Shall we imagine now, that the beauty of virtue and the deformity of vice, the charms of a bright and lasting reputation, the terror of being delivered over as criminal ; to all posterity, the real benefit arising from a conscientious discharge of the duty we owe to others, which benefit fortune can neither hinder nor take away, and the reasonableness of conforming ourselves to the designs of God manifested in the constitution of the human nature ; shall we imagine, I say, that all these are not able to acquire the same power over those who are continually called upon to a contemplation

of them, and they who apply themselves to the study of history are so called upon, as other motives, mean and sordid in comparison of these, can usurp on other men?

II. That the study of history, far from making us wiser, and more useful citizens, as well as better men, may be of no advantage whatsoever; that it may serve to render us mere antiquaries and scholars, or that it may help to make us forward coxcombs and prating pedants, I have already allowed. But this is not the fault of history: and to convince us that it is not, we need only contrast the true use of history with the use that is made of it by such men as these. We ought always to keep in mind, that history is philosophy teaching by examples how to conduct ourselves in all the situations of private and public life; that therefore we must apply ourselves to it in a philosophical spirit and manner; that we must rise from particular to general knowledge, and that we must fit ourselves for the society and business of mankind by accustoming our minds to reflect and meditate on the characters we find described, and the course of events we find related there. Particular examples may be of use sometimes in particular cases; but the application of them is dangerous. It must be done with the utmost circumspection, or it will be seldom done with success. And yet one would think that this was the principal use of the study of history, by what has been written on the subject. I know not whether Machiavel himself is quite free from defect on this account: he seems to carry the use and application of particular examples sometimes too far. Marius and Catulus passed the Alps, met, and defeated the Cimbri beyond the frontiers of Italy. Is it safe to conclude from hence, that whenever one people is invaded by another, the invaded ought to meet and fight the invaders at a distance from their frontiers? Machiavel's countryman, Guicciardin, was aware of the danger that might arise from such an application of examples. Peter of Medicis had involved himself in great difficulties, when those wars and calamities began which Lewis Sforza first drew and entailed on Italy, by flattering the ambition of Charles VIII. in order to gratify his own, and calling the French into that country. Peter owed his distress to his folly in departing from the general tenor of conduct his father Lorenzo had held, and hoped to relieve himself by imitating his father's example in one particular instance. At a time when the wars with the pope and king of Naples had reduced Lorenzo to circumstances of great danger, he took the resolution of going to Ferdinand, and of treating in person with that prince. The resolution appears in history imprudent and almost desperate; were we informed of the secret reasons on which this great man acted, it would appear very possibly a wise and safe measure. It succeeded, and Lorenzo brought back with him public peace and private security. As soon as the French troops entered the dominions of Florence, Peter was struck

with a panic terror, went to Charles VIII., put the port of Leghorn, the fortresses of Pisa, and all the keys of the country into this prince's hands ; whereby he disarmed the Florentine commonwealth, and ruined himself. He was deprived of his authority, and driven out of the city, by the just indignation of the magistrates and people ; and in the treaty which they made afterwards with the king of France it was stipulated, that Peter should not remain within an hundred miles of the state, nor his brothers within the same distance of the city of Florence. On this occasion Guicciardin observes, how dangerous it is to govern ourselves by particular examples ; since, to have the same success, we must have the same prudence, and the same fortune ; and since the example must not only answer the case before us in general, but in every minute circumstance. This is the sense of that admirable historian, and these are his words—‘ *è senza dubbio molto pericoloso il ‘governarsi con gl’ esempi, se non concorrono, non solo in generale, ‘ma in tutti i particolari, le medesime ragioni ; se le cose non sono ‘regolate con la medesima prudenza, e se oltre a tutti li altri fonda- ‘menti, non v’ha la parte sua la medesima fortuna.*’ An observation that Boileau makes, and a rule he lays down in speaking of translations, will properly find their place here, and serve to explain still better what I would establish. ‘ To translate servilely into modern “language an ancient author phrase by phrase, and word by word, is “preposterous : nothing can be more unlike the original than such a “copy. It is not to show, it is to disguise the author ; and he who has “known him only in this dress, would not know him in his own. A “good writer, instead of taking this inglorious and unprofitable task “upon him, will joust contre l’original, rather imitate than translate, “and rather emulate than imitate : he will transfuse the sense and “spirit of the original into his own work, and will endeavour to write “as the ancient author would have wrote, had he writ in the same “language.’ Now, to improve by examples is to improve by imitation. We must catch the spirit, if we can, and conform ourselves to the reason of them ; but we must not affect to translate servilely into our conduct, if your lordship will allow me the expression, the particular conduct of those good and great men, whose images history sets before us. Codrus and the Decii devoted themselves to death : one, because an oracle had foretold that the army whose general was killed would be victorious ; the others in compliance with a superstition that bore great analogy to a ceremony practised in the old Egyptian church, and added afterwards, as many others of the same origin were, to the ritual of the Israelites. These are examples of great magnanimity to be sure, and of magnanimity employed in the most worthy cause. In the early days of the Athenian and Roman government, when the credit of oracles and all kinds of superstition prevailed, when heaven was piously thought to delight in blood, and even human blood was

shed under wild notions of atonement, propitiation, purgation, expiation, and satisfaction, they who set such examples as these acted an heroical and a rational part too. But if a general should act the same part now, and, in order to secure his victory, get killed as fast as he could, he might pass for a hero, but I am sure he would pass for a madman. Even these examples however are of use: they excite us at least to venture our lives freely in the service of our country; by proposing to our imitation men who devoted themselves to certain death in the service of theirs. They show us what a turn of imagination can operate, and how the greatest tribe can carry ardour and confidence, or the contrary sentiments, into the breasts of thousands.

There are certain general principles, and rules of life and conduct, which always must be true, because they are conformable to the invariable nature of things. He who studies history as he would study philosophy will soon distinguish and collect them, and by doing so will soon form to himself a general system of ethics and politics on the surest foundations, on the trial of these principles and rules in all ages, and on the confirmation of them by universal experience. I said he will distinguish them; for once more I must say, that as to particular modes of actions, and measures of conduct, which the customs of different countries, the manners of different ages, and the circumstances of different conjunctures, have appropriated, as it were, it is always ridiculous, or imprudent and dangerous, to employ them. But this is not all. By contemplating the vast variety of particular characters and events; by examining the strange combinations of causes, different, remote, and seemingly opposite, that often concur in producing one effect; and the surprising fertility of one single and uniform cause in the producing of a multitude of effects as different, as remote, and seemingly as opposite; by tracing carefully, as carefully as if the subject he considers were of personal and immediate concern to him, all the minute and sometimes scarce-perceivable circumstances, either in the characters of actors, or in the course of actions, that history enables him to trace, and according to which the success of affairs, even the greatest, is mostly determined; by these, and such methods as these, for I might descend into a much greater detail, a man of parts may improve the study of history to its proper and principal use; he may sharpen the penetration, fix the attention of his mind, and strengthen his judgment; he may acquire the faculty and the habit of discerning quicker, and looking farther; and of exerting that flexibility and steadiness, which are necessary to be joined in the conduct of all affairs that depend on the concurrence or opposition of other men.

Mr. Locke, I think, recommends the study of geometry even to those who have no design of being geometricians; and he gives a reason for it that may be applied to the present case. Such persons

may, forget every problem that has been proposed, and every solution that they or others have given ; but the habit of pursuing long trains of ideas will remain with them, and they will pierce through the mazes of sophism and discover a latent truth, where persons who have not this habit will never find it.

In this manner the study of history will prepare us for action and observation. History is the ancient author : experience is the modern language. We form our taste on the first ; we translate the sense and reason, we transfuse the spirit and force : but we imitate only the particular graces of the original ; we imitate them according to the idiom of our own tongue, that is we substitute often equivalents in the lieu of them, and are far from affecting to copy them servilely. To conclude, as experience is conversant about the present, and the present enables us to guess at the future, so history is conversant about the past, and by knowing the things that have been, we become better able to judge of the things that are.

This use, my lord, which I make the proper and principal use of the study of history, is not insisted on by those who have written concerning the method to be followed in this study ; and since we propose different ends, we must of course take different ways. Few of their treatises have fallen into my hands : one, the method of Bodin, a man famous in his time, I remember to have read. I took it up with much expectation many years ago ; I went through it, and remained extremely disappointed. He might have given almost any other title to his book as properly as that which stands before it. There are not many pages in it that relate any more to his subject than a tedious fifth chapter, wherein he accounts for the characters of nations according to their positions on the globe, and according to the influence of the stars ; and assures his reader that nothing can be more necessary than such a disquisition, ‘ad universam historiarum cognitionem, et incorruptum ‘earum judicium.’ In his method, we are to take first a general view of universal history and chronology, in short abstracts, and then to study all particular histories and systems. Seneca speaks of men who spend their whole lives in learning how to act in life, ‘dum vitæ instrumenta ‘conquirunt.’ I doubt that this method of Bodin would conduct us in the same, or as bad a way ; would leave us no time for action, or would make us unfit for it. A huge common-place book, wherein all the remarkable sayings and facts that we find in history are to be registered, may enable a man to talk or write like Bodin, but will never make him a better man, nor enable him to promote, like a useful citizen, the security, the peace, the welfare, or the grandeur of the community to which he belongs. I shall proceed therefore to speak of a method that leads to such purposes as these directly without any regard to the methods that have been prescribed by others.

I think then we must be on our guard against this very affectation

of learning, and this very wantonness of curiosity, which the examples and precepts we commonly meet with are calculated to flatter and indulge. We must neither dwell too long in the dark, nor wander about till we lose our way in the light. We are too apt to carry systems of philosophy beyond all our ideas, and systems of history beyond all our memorials. The philosopher begins with reason, and ends with imagination. The historian inverts this order : he begins without memorials, and he sometimes ends with them. This silly custom is so prevalent among men of letters who apply themselves to the study of history, and has so much prejudice and so much authority on the side of it, that your lordship must give me leave to speak a little more particularly and plainly than I have done, in favour of common sense, against an absurdity which is almost sanctified.

REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE OF ANCIENT HISTORY.

The nature of man, and the constant course of human affairs, render it impossible that the first ages of any new nation which forms itself should afford authentic materials for history. We have none such concerning the originals of any of those nations that actually subsist. Shall we expect to find them concerning the originals of nations dispersed, or extinguished, two or three thousand years ago ? If a thread of dark and uncertain traditions, therefore, is made, as it commonly is, the introduction to history, we should touch it lightly, and run swiftly over it, far from insisting on it either as authors or readers. Such introductions are at best no more than fanciful preludes, that try the instruments and precede the concert. He must be void of judgment and taste, one would think, who can take the first for true history, or the last for true harmony. And yet so it has been and so it is, not in Germany and Holland alone ; but in Italy, in France and in England, where genius has abounded, and taste has been long refined. Our great scholars have dealt and deal in fables at least as much as our poets, with this difference to the disadvantage of the former, to whom I may apply the remark as justly as Seneca applied it to the dialecticians—‘tristius inepti sunt. Illi ex professo lascivunt ; hi agere ‘seipso aliquid existimant’ Learned men, in learned and inquisitive ages, who possessed many advantages that we have not, and among others that of being placed so many centuries nearer the original truths that are the objects of so much laborious search, despaired of finding them, and gave fair warning to posterity, if posterity would have taken it. The ancient geographers, as Plutarch says in the life of Theseus, when they laid down in their maps the little extent of sea and land that was known to them, left great spaces void. In some of

these spaces they wrote, here are sandy deserts, in others, here are impassable marshes, here is a chain of inhospitable mountains, or here is a frozen ocean. Just so both he and other historians, when they related fabulous originals, were not wanting to set out the bounds beyond which there was neither history nor chronology. Censorinus has preserved the distinction of three eras established by Varro. This learned Roman antiquary did not determine whether the first period had any beginning, but fixed the end of it at the first, that is, according to him, the Ogygian, deluge ; which he placed I think some centuries backwarder than Julius Africanus thought fit to place it afterwards. To this era of absolute darkness he supposed that a kind of twilight succeeded, from the Ogygian deluge to the Olympic era, and this he called the fabulous age. From this vulgar era when Coræbus was crowned victor, and long after the true era when these games were instituted by Iphitus, the Greeks pretend to be able to digest their history with some order, clearness, and certainty : Varro therefore looked on it as the break of day, or the beginning of the historical age. He might do so the rather perhaps, because he included by it the date he likewise fixed, or, upon recollection, that the elder Cato had fixed, of the foundation of Rome within the period from which he supposed that historical truth was to be found. But yet most certain it is, that the history and chronology of the ages that follow are as confused and uncertain as the history and chronology of those which immediately precede this era.

The State of Ancient Profane History.

The Greeks did not begin to write in prose till Pherecides of Syros introduced the custom ; and Cadmus Milesius was their first historian. Now these men flourished long after the true, or even the vulgar Olympic era ; for Josephus affirms, and in this he has great probability on his side, that Cadmus Milesius and Acusilaus Argivus, in a word the oldest historians in Greece, were very little more ancient than the expedition of the Persians against the Greeks. As several centuries passed between the Olympic era and these first historians, there passed likewise several more between these and the first Greek chronologers. Timæus about the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and Eratosthenes about that of Ptolemy Evergetes, seem first to have digested the events recorded by them according to the olympiads. Precedent writers mentioned sometimes the olympiads ; but this rule of reckoning was not brought into established use sooner. The rule could not serve to render history more clear and certain till it was followed ; it was not followed till about five hundred years after the Olympic era. There remains therefore no pretence to place the beginning of the historical age so high as Varro placed it, by five hundred years.

Hellenicus indeed and others pretended to give the originals of cities and governments, and to deduce their narrations from great antiquity. Their works are lost, but we can judge how inconsiderable the loss is, by the writings of that age which remain, and by the report of those who had seen the others. For instance, Herodotus was contemporary with Hellenicus. Herodotus was inquisitive enough in all conscience, and proposed to publish all he could learn of the antiquities of the Ionians, Lydians, Phrygians, Egyptians, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians: that is of almost all the nations who were known in his time to exist. If he wrote Assyriacs, we have them not; but we are sure that this word was used proverbially to signify fabulous legends soon after his time, and when the mode of publishing such relations and histories prevailed among the Greeks.

In the nine books we have, he goes back indeed almost to the Olympic era, without taking notice of it however; but he goes back only to tell an old woman's tale, of a king who lost his crown for showing his wife naked to his favourite, and from Candaules and Gyges he hastens, or rather takes a great leap, down to Cyrus.

Something like a thread of history of the Medes and then of the Persians, to the flight of Xerxes, which happened in his own time is carried on. The events of his own time are related with an air of history. But all accounts of the Greeks as well as the Persians, which precede these, and all the accounts which he gives occasionally of other nations, were drawn up most manifestly on broken, perplexed, and doubtful scraps of tradition. He had neither original records, nor any authentic memorials to guide him, and yet these are the sole foundations of true history. Herodotus flourished, I think, little more than half a century, and Xenophon little more than a whole century, after the death of Cyrus: and yet how various and repugnant are the relations made by these two historians, of the birth, life, and death of this prince? If more histories had come down from these ages to ours, the uncertainty and inutility of them all would be but the more manifest. We should find that Acusilaus rejected the traditions of Hesiod, that Hellenicus contradicted Acusilaus, that Ephorus accused Hellenicus, that Timæus accused Ephorus, and all posterior writers Timæus. This is the report of Josephus. But in order to show the ignorance and falsehood of all those writers through whom the traditions of profane antiquity came to the Greeks, I will quote to your lordship a much better authority than that of Josephus,—the authority of one who had no prejudice to bias him, no particular cause to defend, nor system of ancient history to establish, and all the helps as well as talents necessary to make him a competent judge. The man I mean is the historian Strabo.

Speaking of the Massagetae in his eleventh book, he writes to this effect: that no author had given a true account of them, though

several had written of the war that Cyrus waged against them ; and that historians had found as little credit in what they had related concerning the affairs of the Persians, Medes, and Syrians. That this was due to their folly : for observing that those who wrote fables professedly were held in esteem, these men imagined they should render their writings more agreeable, if under the appearance and pretence of true history they related what they had neither seen nor heard from persons able to give them true information ; and that accordingly their only aim had been to dress up pleasing and marvellous relations : that one may better give credit to Hesiod and Homer, when they talk of their heroes, nay even to dramatic poets, than to Ctesias, Herodotus, Hellanicus, and their followers : that it is not safe to give credit even to the greatest part of the historians, who wrote concerning Alexander ; since they too, encouraged by the greater reputation of this conqueror, by the distance to which he carried his arms, and by the difficulty of disproving what they said of actions performed in regions so remote, were apt to deceive : that indeed when the Roman empire on one side, and the Parthian on the other, came to extend themselves, the truth of things came to be better known.

You see, my lord, not only how late profane history began to be written by the Greeks, but how much later it began to be written with any regard to truth ; and consequently what wretched materials the learned men who arose after the age of Alexander had to employ, when they attempted to form systems of ancient history and chronology. We have some remains of that laborious compiler Diodorus Siculus, but do we find in him any thread of ancient history, I mean that which passed for ancient in his time ? what complaints on the contrary does he not make of former historians ? how frankly does he confess the little and uncertain light he had to follow in his researches ? Yet Diodorus, as well as Plutarch and others, had not only the older Greek historians, but the more modern antiquaries, who pretended to have searched into the records and registers of nations, even at that time renowned for their antiquity. Berossus for instance and Manetho, one a Babylonian and the other an Egyptian priest, had published the antiquities of their countries in the time of the Ptolemies. Berossus pretended to give the history of four hundred and eighty years. Pliny, if I remember right, for I say this on memory, speaks to this effect in the sixth book of his natural history ; and if it was so, these years were probably years of Nabonassar. Manetho began his history, God knows when, from the progress of Isis, or some other as well ascertained period. He followed the Egyptian traditions of dynasties of gods and demi-gods ; and derived his anecdotes from the first Mercury, who had inscribed them in sacred characters, on antediluvian pillars, antediluvian at least according to our received chronology, from which the second Mercury had transcribed them, and inserted them into his

works. We have not these antiquities, for the monk of Viterbo was soon detected ; and if we had them, they would either add to our uncertainty, and increase the chaos of learning, or tell us nothing worth our knowledge. For thus I reason, had they given particular and historical accounts conformable to the scriptures of the Jews ; Josephus, Julius Africanus, and Eusebius would have made quite other extracts from their writings, and would have altered and contradicted them less. The accounts they gave therefore were repugnant to sacred writ, or they were defective ; they would have established Pyrrhonism, or have baulked our curiosity.

LETTER IV.

OF THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

- I. *That there is in history sufficient authenticity to render it useful, notwithstanding all objections to the contrary.—II. Of the method and due restrictions to be observed in the study of it.*

WHETHER the letter I now begin to write will be long or short, I know not ; but I find my memory is refreshed, my imagination warmed, and matter flows in so fast upon me, that I have not time to press it close. Since, therefore, you have provoked me to write, you must be content to take what follows.

I have observed already that we are apt naturally to apply to ourselves what has happened to other men, and that examples take their force from hence ; as well those which history, as those which experience, offers to our reflection. What we do not believe to have happened, therefore, we shall not thus apply ; and for want of the same application such examples will not have the same effect. Ancient history, such ancient history as I have described, is quite unfit therefore in this respect to answer the ends that every reasonable man should propose to himself in this study ; because such ancient history will never gain sufficient credit with any reasonable man. A tale well told, or a comedy or a tragedy well wrought up, may have a momentary effect upon the mind, by heating the imagination, surprising the judgment, and affecting strongly the passions. The Athenians are said to have been transported into a kind of martial frenzy by the representation of a tragedy of Aeschylus, and to have marched under this influence from the theatre to the plains of Marathon. These momentary impressions might be managed, for aught I know, in such manner as to contribute a little, by frequent repetitions of them, towards maintaining a kind of habitual contempt of folly, detestation of vice, and

admiration of virtue in well-policed commonwealths. But then these impressions cannot be made, nor this little effect be wrought, unless the fables bear an appearance of truth. When they bear this appearance, reason connives at the innocent fraud of imagination ; reason dispenses, in favour of probability, with those strict rules of criticism that she has established to try the truth of fact ; but after all, she receives these fables as fables ; and as such only she permits imagination to make the most of them. If they pretended to be history, they would be soon subjected to another and more severe examination. What may have happened, is the matter of an ingenious fable ; what has happened, is that of an authentic history ; the impressions which one or the other makes are in proportion. When imagination grows lawless and wild, rambles out of the precincts of nature, and tells of heroes and giants, fairies and enchanters, of events and of phenomena repugnant to universal experience, to our clearest and most distinct ideas, and to all the known laws of nature, reason does not connive a moment ; but far from receiving such narrations as historical, she rejects them as unworthy to be placed even among the fabulous. Such narrations therefore cannot make the slightest momentary impressions, on a mind fraught with knowledge. Imposed by authority, and assisted by artifice, the delusion hardly prevails over common sense ; blind ignorance almost sees, and rash superstition hesitates : nothing less than enthusiasm and frenzy can give credit to such histories, or apply such examples. Don Quixote believed, but even Sancho doubted.

What I have said will not be much controverted by any man who has read Amadis of Gaul, or has examined our ancient traditions without prepossession. The truth is, the principal difference between them seems to be this. In Amadis of Gaul we have a thread of absurdities that are invented without any regard to probability, and that lay no claim to belief : ancient traditions are a heap of fables, under which some particular truths, inscrutable, and therefore useless to mankind, may lie concealed ; which have a just pretence to nothing more, and yet impose themselves upon us, and become under the venerable name of ancient history the foundations of modern fables ; the materials with which so many systems of fancy have been erected.

But now, as men are apt to carry their judgments into extremes, there are some that will be ready to insist that all history is fabulous, and that the very best is nothing better than a probable tale, artfully contrived, and plausibly told, wherein truth and falsehood are indistinguishably blended together. All the instances, and all the commonplace arguments, that Bayle and others have employed to establish this sort of Pyrrhonism, will be quoted ; and from thence it will be concluded, that if the pretended histories of the first ages, and of the originals of nations, be too improbable and too ill vouched to procur-

any degree of belief, those histories that have been written later, that carry a greater air of probability, and that boast even cotemporary authority, are at least insufficient to gain that degree of firm belief which is necessary to render the study of them useful to mankind. But here that happens which often happens : the premises are true, and the conclusion is false ; because a general axiom is established precariously on a certain number of partial observations. This matter is of consequence, for it tends to ascertain the degrees of assent that we may give to history.

I agree then that history has been purposely and systematically falsified in all ages, and that partiality and prejudice have occasioned both voluntary and involuntary errors even in the best. How monstrous were the absurdities that the priesthood imposed on the ignorance and superstition of mankind in the Pagan world, concerning the originals of religions and governments, their institutions and rites, their laws and customs ? What opportunities had they for such impositions, whilst the keeping the records and collecting the traditions was in so many nations the peculiar office of this order of men ? A custom highly extolled by Josephus, but plainly liable to the grossest frauds, and even a temptation to them. That the Jews have been guilty of this will be allowed ; and to the shame of Christians, if not of Christianity, the fathers of one church have no right to throw the first stone at the fathers of the other.

I might fill many pages with instances of extravagant fables that have been invented in several nations to celebrate their antiquity, to ennable their originals, and to make them appear illustrious in the arts of peace and the triumphs of war. When the brain is well heated, and devotion or vanity, the semblance of virtue or real vice, and, above all, disputes and contests, have inspired that complication of passions we term zeal, the effects are much the same, and history becomes very often a lying panegyric or a lying satire ; for different nations, or different parties in the same nation, belie one another without any respect for truth, as they murder one another without any regard to right or sense of humanity. Religious zeal may boast this horrid advantage over civil zeal, that the effects of it have been more sanguinary, and the malice more unrelenting. In another respect they are more alike, and keep a nearer proportion ; different religions have not been quite so barbarous to one another as sects of the same religion ; and in like manner nation has had better quarter from nation, than party from party. But in all these controversies, men have pushed their rage beyond their own and their adversaries' lives ; they have endeavoured to interest posterity in their quarrels, and by rendering history subservient to this wicked purpose, they have done their utmost to perpetuate scandal and to immortalise their animosity. The heathen taxed the Jews even with idolatry ; the Jews joined with

the heathen to render Christianity odious; but the church, who beat them at their own weapons during these contests, has had this further triumph over them, as well as over the several sects that have arisen within her own pale: the works of those who have written against her have been destroyed; and whatever she advanced, to justify herself and to defame her adversaries, is preserved in her annals and the writings of her doctors.

The charge of corrupting history, in the cause of religion, has been always committed to the most famous champions of each church; and if I was not more afraid of tiring, than of scandalizing your lordship, I could quote to you examples of modern churchmen who have endeavoured to justify foul language by the New Testament, and cruelty by the Old. This charge belongs to the pedants of every nation, and the tools of every party. What accusations of idolatry and superstition have not been brought and aggravated against the Mahometans? Those wretched Christians who returned from those wars, so improperly called the holy wars, rumoured these stories about the west; and you may find, in some of the old chroniclers and romance writers, as well as poets, the Saracens called Paynims; though surely they were much further off from any suspicion of polytheism, than those who called them by that name. When Mahomet II. took Constantinople in the fifteenth century, the Mahometans began to be a little better, and but a little better, known, than they had been before, to these parts of the world. But their religion, as well as their customs and manners, was strangely misrepresented by the Greek refugees that fled from the Turks, and the terror and hatred which this people had inspired by the rapidity of their conquests and by their ferocity, made all these misrepresentations universally pass for truths. Many such instances may be collected from Moraccio's refutation of the koran, and Relandus has published a very valuable treatise on purpose to refute these calumnies, and to justify the Mahometans. Does not this example incline your lordship to think that the heathens, and the Arians, and other heretics, would not appear quite so absurd in their opinions, nor so abominable in their practice, as the orthodox Christians have represented them; if some Relandus could arise, with the materials necessary to their justification, in his hands? He who reflects on the circumstances that attended letters, from the time when Constantine, instead of uniting the characters of emperor and sovereign priest in himself when he became Christian, as they were united in him and all the other emperors in the pagan system of government, gave to men independent wealth and power to the clergy, and the means of oppressing the laity, so much more: he who carries these reflections on through all the ages of empire, and through those ages of ignorance and superstition, wherein it was hard to say which was greater, the tyranny of the clergy or the severity of the laity: he who considers the extreme severity for the sake of the

laws made by Theodosius in order to stifle every writing that the orthodox clergy, that is the clergy then in fashion, disliked ; or the character and influence of such a priest as Gregory called the Great, who proclaimed war to all heathen learning in order to promote Christian verity ; and flattered Brunehault, and abetted Phocas : he who considers all these things I say, will not be at a loss to find the reasons, why history, both that which was written before, and a great part of that which has been written since the Christian era, is come to us so imperfect and so corrupt.

When the imperfection is due to a total want of memorials, either because none were originally written, or because they have been lost by devastations of countries, extirpations of people, and other accidents in a long course of time ; or because zeal, malice and policy have joined their endeavours to destroy them purposely, we must be content to remain in our ignorance, and there is no great harm in that. Secure from being deceived, I can submit to be uninformed. But when there is not a total want of memorials, when some have been lost or destroyed, and others have been preserved and propagated, then we are in danger of being deceived, and therefore he must be very implicit indeed who receives for true the history of any religion or nation, and much more that of any sect or party, without having the means of confronting it with some other history. A reasonable man will not be thus implicit. He will not establish the truth of history on single, but on concurrent testimony. If there be none such, he will doubt absolutely ; if there be a little such, he will proportion his assent or dissent accordingly. A small gleam of light borrowed from foreign anecdotes, serves often to discover a whole system of falsehood, and even they who corrupt history frequently betray themselves by their ignorance or inadvertency. Examples whereof I could easily produce. Upon the whole matter in all these cases, we cannot be deceived essentially unless we please, and therefore there is no reason to establish Pyrrhonism that we may avoid the ridicule of credulity.

In all other cases, there is less reason still to do so ; for when histories and historical memorials abound, even those that are false serve to the discovery of the truth. Inspired by different passions and contrived for opposite purposes, they contradict, and, contradicting, they convict one another. Criticism separates the ore from the dross, and extracts from various authors a series of true history which could not have been found entire in any one of them, and will command our assent when it is formed with judgment and represented with candour. If this may be done, as it has been done sometimes, with the help of authors who wrote on purpose to deceive, how much more easily and more effectually may it be done with the help of those who paid a greater regard to truth ? In a multitude of writers there will be always some, either incapable of gross prevarication from the fear of being

discovered, and of acquiring infamy whilst they seek for fame ; or else attached to truth upon a nobler and surer principle. It is certain that these, even the last of them, are fallible. Bribed by some passion or other, the former may venture now and then to propagate a falsehood, or to disguise the truth ; like the painter that drew in profile, as Lucian says, the picture of a prince that had but one eye. Montaigne objects to the memorials of Du Bellay, that though the gross of the facts be truly related, yet these authors turned everything they mentioned to the advantage of their master, and mentioned nothing which could not be so turned. The old fellow's words are worth quoting.—‘ De contourner le jugement des evenemens souvent contre raison à notre avantage, et d'obmettre tout ce qu'il y a de chatouilleux en la vie de leur maître, ils en font mestier.’ These, and such as these, deviate occasionally and voluntarily from truth ; but even they who are attached to it the most religiously, may slide sometimes into involuntary error. In matters of history we prefer very justly cotemporary authority, and yet cotemporary authors are the most liable to be warped from the strait rule of truth, in writing on subjects which have affected them strongly, et quorum pars magna fuerunt. I am so persuaded of this, from what I have felt in myself, and observed in others, that if life and health enough fall to my share, and I am able to finish what I meditate, —a kind of history from the late queen's accession to the throne to the peace of Utrecht,—there will be no materials that I shall examine more scrupulously and severely than those of the time when the events to be spoken of were in transaction. But though the writers of these two sorts, both of whom pay as much regard to truth as the various infirmities of our nature admit, are fallible ; yet this fallibility will not be sufficient to give colour to Pyrrhonism. Where their sincerity as to fact is doubtful, we strike out truth by the confrontation of different accounts, as we strike out sparks of fire by the collision of flints and steel. Where their judgments are suspicious of partiality, we may judge for ourselves ; or adopt their judgments after weighing them with certain grains of allowance. A little natural sagacity will proportion these grains according to the particular circumstances of the authors, or their general characters, for even these influence. Thus Montaigne pretends, but he exaggerates a little, that Guicciardin nowhere ascribes any one action to a virtuous, but every one to a vicious principle. Something like this has been reproached to Tacitus, and notwithstanding all the sprightly loose observations of Montaigne in one of his essays where he labours to prove the contrary, read Plutarch's comparisons in what language you please, I am of Bodin's mind, you will perceive that they were made by a Greek. In short, my lord, the favourable opportunities of corrupting history have been often interrupted, and are now over in so many countries, that truth penetrates even into those where lying continues still to be part of the policy

ecclesiastical and civil; or where, to say the best we can say, truth is never suffered to appear, till she has passed through hands out of which she seldom returns entire and undefiled.

But it is time I should conclude this head, under which I have touched some of those reasons that show the folly of endeavouring to establish universal Pyrrhonism in matters of history, because there are few histories without some lies, and none without some mistakes; and that prove the body of history which we possess, since ancient memorials have been so critically examined, and modern memorials have been so multiplied, to contain in it such a probable series of events, easily distinguishable from the improbable, as force the assent of every man who is in his senses, and are therefore sufficient to answer all the purposes of the study of history. I might have appealed perhaps, without entering into the argument at all, to any man of candour, whether his doubts concerning the truth of history have hindered him from applying the examples he has met with in it, and from judging of the present, and sometimes of the future, by the past? Whether he has not been touched with reverence and admiration, at the virtue and wisdom of some men, and of some ages, and whether he has not felt indignation and contempt for others? whether Epaminondas or Phocion, for instance, the Decii or the Scipios, have not raised in his mind a flame of public spirit and private virtue? and whether he has not shuddered with horror at the proscriptions of Marius and Sylla, at the treachery of Theodotus and Achillas, and at the consummate cruelty of an infant king? 'Quis non contra Marii 'arma, et contra Syllæ proscriptionem concitatur? Quis non Theodo, 'et Achillae, et ipsi puer, non puerile auso facinus, infestus est?' If this be a digression, your lordship will excuse it.

II. What has been said concerning the multiplicity of histories, and of historical memorials, wherewith our libraries abound since the resurrection of letters happened and the art of printing began, puts me in mind of another general rule, that ought to be observed by every man who intends to make a real improvement, and to become wiser as well as better, by the study of history. I hinted at this rule in a former letter, where I said that we should neither grope in the dark nor wander in the light. History must have a certain degree of probability and authenticity, or the examples we find in it will not carry a force sufficient to make due impressions on our minds, nor to illustrate nor to strengthen the precepts of philosophy and the rules of good policy. But besides, when histories have this necessary authenticity and probability, there is much discernment to be employed in the choice and the use we make of them. Some are to be read, some are to be studied; and some may be neglected entirely, not only without detriment, but with advantage. Some are the proper objects of one man's curiosity, some of others, and some of all men's; but all

history is not an object of curiosity for any man. He who improperly, wantonly, and absurdly makes it so, indulges a sort of canine appetite: the curiosity of one, like the hunger of the other, devours ravenously and without distinction whatever falls in its way; but neither of them digests. They heap crudity upon crudity, and nourish and improve nothing but their distemper. Some such characters I have known, though it is not the most common extreme into which men are apt to fall. One of them I knew in this country. He joined to a more than athletic strength of body, a prodigious memory; and to both a prodigious industry. He had read almost constantly twelve or fourteen hours a day, for five and twenty or thirty years; and had heaped together as much learning as could be crowded into a head. In the course of my acquaintance with him, I consulted him once or twice, not oftener; for I found this mass of learning of as little use to me as to the owner. The man was communicative enough, but nothing was distinct in his mind. How could it be otherwise? He had never spared time to think, all was employed in reading. His reason had not the merit of common mechanism. When you press a watch or pull a clock, they answer your question with precision; for they repeat exactly the hour of the day, and tell you neither more nor less than you desire to know. But when you asked this man a question, he overwhelmed you by pouring forth all that the several terms or words of your question recalled to his memory; and if he omitted anything, it was that very thing to which the sense of the whole question should have led him and confined him. To ask him a question, was to wind up a spring in his memory, that rattled on with vast rapidity, and confused noise, till the force of it was spent; and you went away with all the noise in your ears, stunned and uninformed. I never left him that I was not ready to say to him, ‘Dieu vous fasse la grace de ‘devenir moins savant!’ a wish that La Mothe le Vayer mentions upon some occasion or other, and that he would have done well to have applied to himself upon many.

He who reads with discernment and choice, will acquire less learning, but more knowledge: and as this knowledge is collected with design, and cultivated with art and method, it will be at all times of immediate and ready use to himself and others.

Thus useful arms in magazines we place,
All ranged in order, and disposed with grace:
Nor thus alone the curious eye to please,
But to be found, when need requires, with ease.

You remember the verses, my lord, in our friend's essay on criticism, which was the work of his childhood almost; but is such a monument of good sense and poetry as no other that I know has raised in his riper years.

He who reads without this discernment and choice, and, like Bodin's pupil, resolves to read all, will not have time, no nor capacity neither, to do anything else. He will not be able to think, without which it is impertinent to read; nor to act, without which it is impertinent to think. He will assemble materials with much pain^s, and purchase them at much expense, and have neither leisure nor skill to frame them into proper scantlings, or to prepare them for use. To what purpose sh ould he husband his time, or learn architecture? he has no design to build. But then to what purpose all these quarries of stone, all these mountains of sand and lime, all these forests of oak and deal? 'Magno impendio temporum, magna alienarum aurium molestiâ, 'laudatio hæc constat, O hominem litteratum! Simus hoc titulo 'rusticiore contenti, O virum bonum!' We may add, and Seneca might have added in his own style, and according to the manners and characters of his own age, another title as rustic, and as little in fashion, 'O virum sapientiâ sua simplicem, et simplicitate sua sapientem! O virum utilem, sibi, suî, reipublicæ, et humano generi!' I have said perhaps already, but no matter, it cannot be repeated too often, that the drift of all philosophy, and of all political speculations, ought to be the making us better men and better citizens. Those studies, which have no intention towards improving our moral characters, have no pretence to be styled philosophical. 'Quis est enim,' says Tully in his offices, 'qui nullis officiis præceptis tradendis, philosophum se audeat dicere?' Whatever political speculation, instead of preparing us to be useful to society and to promote the happiness of mankind, are only systems for gratifying private ambition, and promoting private interests at the public expense; all such, I say, deserve to be burnt, and the authors of them to starve, like Machiavel, in a jail.

LETTER V.

- I. *The great use of history, properly so called, as distinguished from the writings of mere annalists and antiquaries.—II. Greek and Roman historians.—III. Some idea of a complete history.—IV. Further cautions to be observed in this study, and the regulation of it according to the different professions and situations of men: above all, the use to be made of it (1) by divines, and (2) by those who are called to the service of their country.*

I REMEMBER my last letter ended abruptly, and a long interval has since passed: so that the thread I had then spun has slipt from me. I will try to recover it, and to pursue the task your lordship has obliged me to continue. Besides the pleasure of obeying your orders,

it is likewise of some advantage to myself, to recollect my thoughts, and resume a study in which I was conversant formerly. For nothing can be more true than that saying of Solon reported by Plato, though censured by him impertinently enough in one of his wild books of laws—*Assiduè addiscens, ad senium venio.* The truth is, the most knowing man in the course of the longest life, will have always much to learn, and the wisest and best much to improve. This rule will hold in the knowledge and improvement to be acquired by the study of history : and therefore even he who has gone to this school in his youth, should not neglect it in his age. ‘I read in Livy,’ says Montaigne, ‘what another man does not: and Plutarch read there ‘what I do not.’ Just so the same man may read at fifty what he did not read in the same book at five and twenty : at least I have found it so by my own experience on many occasions.

By comparing, in this study, the experience of other men and other ages with our own, we improve both : we analyse, as it were, philosophy. We reduce all the abstract speculations of ethics, and all the general rules of human policy, to their first principles. With these advantages every man may, though few men do, advance daily towards those ideas, those increased essences a Platonist would say, which no human creature can reach in practice, but in the nearest approaches to which the perfection of our nature consists ; because every approach of this kind renders a man better and wiser, for himself, for his family, for the little community of his own country, and for the great community of the world. Be not surprised, my lord, at the order in which I place these objects. Whatever order divines and moralists, who contemplate the duties belonging to these objects, may place them in, this is the order they hold in nature : and I have always thought that we might lead ourselves and others to private virtue, more effectually by a due observation of this order, than by any of those sublime refinements that pervert it.

‘Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake :
The centre moved, a circle strait succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads ;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race.’

So sings our friend Pope, my lord, and so I believe. So I shall prove, too, if I mistake not, in an epistle I am about to write to him, in order to complete a set that were written some years ago.

A man of my age, who returns to the study of history, has no time to lose, because he has little to live ; a man of your lordship’s age has no time to lose, because he has much to do. For different reasons therefore the same rules will suit us. Neither of us must grope in the

dark, neither of us must wander in the light. I have done the first formerly a good deal ; ‘ne verba mihi darentur ; ne aliquid esse in ‘hac recondita antiquitatis scientia magni ac secreti boni judicaremus.’ If you take my word, you will throw none of your time away in the same manner : and I shall have the less regret for that which I have misspent, if I persuade you to hasten down from the broken traditions of antiquity, to the more entire as well as more authentic histories of ages more modern. In the study of these we shall find many a complete series of events, preceded by a deduction of their immediate and remote causes, related in their full extent, and accompanied with such a detail of circumstances and characters, as may transport the attentive reader back to the very time, make him a party to the councils, and an actor in the whole scene of affairs. Such draughts as these, either found in history or extracted by our own application from it, and such alone, are truly useful. Thus history becomes what she ought to be, and what she has been sometimes called, *magistra vitæ*, the mistress, like philosophy, of human life. If she is not this, she is at best *nuntia vetustatis*, the gazette of antiquity, or a dry register of useless anecdotes. Suetonius says that Tiberius used to inquire of the grammarians, ‘quæ mater Hecubæ, quod Achillis ‘nomen inter virgines fuisse, quid sirenes cantare sint solitæ?’ Seneca mentions certain Greek authors, who examined very accurately, whether Anacreon loved wine or women best, whether Sappho was a common whore, with other points of equal importance ; and I make no doubt but that a man, better acquainted than I have the honour to be with the learned persons of our own country, might find some who have discovered several anecdotes concerning the giant Albion, concerning Samothes the son, or Brito the grandson of Japheth, and concerning Brutus who led a colony into our island after the siege of Troy, as the others repeopled it after the deluge. But ten millions of such anecdotes as these, though they were true, and complete authentic volumes of Egyptian or Chaldean, of Greek or Latin, of Gallic or British, of French or Saxon records, would be of no value in my sense, because of no use towards our improvement in wisdom and virtue, if they contained nothing more than dynasties and genealogies, and a bare mention of remarkable events in the order of time, like journals, chronological tables, or dry and meagre annals.

I say the same of all those modern compositions in which we find rather the heads of history, than anything that deserves to be called history. Their authors are either abridgers or compilers. The first do neither honour to themselves nor good to mankind ; for surely the abridger is in a form below the translator : and the book, at least the history, that wants to be abridged, does not deserve to be read. They have done anciently a great deal of hurt by substituting many a bad book in the place of a good one ; and by giving occasion to men, who

contented themselves with extracts and abridgments, to neglect, and through their neglect to lose the invaluable originals : for which reason I curse Constantine Porphyrogenetes as heartily as I do Gregory. The second are of some use, as far as they contribute to preserve public acts, and dates, and the memory of great events. But they who are thus employed have seldom the means of knowing those private passages on which all public transactions depend, and as seldom the skill and the talents necessary to put what they do know well together : they cannot see the working of the mine, but their industry collects the matter that is thrown out. It is the business, or it should be so, of others to separate the pure ore from the dross, to stamp it into coin, and to enrich not encumber mankind. When there are none sufficient to this task, there may be antiquaries, and there may be journalists or annalists, but there are no historians.

It is worth while to observe the progress that the Romans and the Greeks made towards history. The Romans had journalists or annalists from the very beginning of their state. In the sixth century, or very near it at soonest, they began to have antiquaries, and some attempts were made towards writing of history. I call these first historical productions attempts only or essays : and they were no more, neither among the Romans nor among the Greeks. ‘Graeci ipsi sic initio ‘scriptitarunt, ut noster Cato, ut Pictor, ut Piso.’ It is Anthony, not the triumvir, my lord, but his grandfather the famous orator, who says this in the second book of ‘Tully de Oratore :’ he adds afterwards, ‘Itaque qualis apud Græcos Pherecydes, Hellanicus, Acusilaus, aliquie ‘permulti, talis noster Cato, et Pictor, et Piso.’ I know that Anthony speaks here strictly of defect of style and want of oratory. They were ‘tantummodo narratores, non exornatores,’ as he expresses himself ; but as they wanted style and skill to write in such a manner as might answer all the ends of history, so they wanted materials. Pherecydes wrote something about Iphigenia, and the festivals of Bacchus. Hellanicus was a poetical historian, and Acusilaus graved genealogies on plates of brass. Pictor, who is called by Livy *scriptorum antiquissimus*, published, I think, some short annals of his own time. Neither he nor Piso could have sufficient materials for the history of Rome ; nor Cato, I presume, even for the antiquities of Italy. The Romans, with the other people of that country, were then just rising out of barbarity, and growing acquainted with letters ; for those that the Grecian colonies might bring into Sicily, and the southern parts of Italy, spread little, or lasted little, and made in the whole no figure. And whatever learning might have flourished among the ancient Etrurians, which was, perhaps, at most, nothing better than augury and divination and superstitious rites, which were admired and cultivated in ignorant ages, even that was almost entirely worn out of memory. Pedants who would impose all the traditions of the four first ages of Rome, for authentic

history, have insisted much on certain annals, of which mention is made in the very place I have just now quoted. ‘*Ab initio rerum Romanarum*,’ says the same interlocutor, ‘*usque ad P. Mucium pontificem maximum, res omnes singulorum annorum mandabat literis pontifex maximus, efferebatque in album, et proponebat tabulam domi, potestas ut esset populo cognoscendi, iidemque etiam nunc annales maximi nominantur.*’ But, my lord, be pleased to take notice, that the very distinction I make is made here between a bare annalist and an historian: ‘*Erat historia nihil aliud*,’ in these early days, ‘*nisi annalium confectio.*’ Take notice likewise, by the way, that Livy, whose particular application it had been to search into this matter, affirms positively that the greatest part of all public and private monuments, among which he specifies these very annals, had been destroyed in the sack of Rome by the Gauls; and Plutarch cites Clodius for the same assertion, in the life of Numa Pompilius. Take notice in the last place of that which is more immediately to our present purpose. These annals could contain nothing more than short minutes or memorandums hung up in a table at the pontiff’s house, like the rules of the game in a billiard-room, and much such history as we have in the epitomes prefixed to the books of Livy or of any other historian, in lapidary inscriptions, or in some modern almanacs. Materials for history they were no doubt, but scanty and insufficient; such as those ages could produce when writing and reading were accomplishments so uncommon, that the praetor was directed by law, *clavum pangere*, to drive a nail into the door of a temple, that the number of years might be reckoned by the number of nails. Such, in short, as we have in monkish annalists, and other ancient chroniclers of nations now in being: but not such as can entitle the authors of them to be called historians, nor can enable others to write history in that fullness in which it must be written to become a lesson of ethics and politics. The truth is, nations like men have their infancy; and the few passages of that time, which they retain, are not such as deserved most to be remembered, but such as, being most proportioned to that age, made the strongest impressions on their minds. In those nations that preserve their dominion long, and grow up to manhood, the elegant as well as the necessary arts and sciences are improved to some degree of perfection; and history, that was at first intended only to record the names or perhaps the general characters of some famous men, and to transmit in gross the remarkable events of every age to posterity, is raised to answer another and a nobler end.

II. Thus it happened among the Greeks, but much more among the Romans, notwithstanding the prejudices in favour of the former, even among the latter. I have sometimes thought that Virgil might have justly ascribed to his countrymen the praise of writing history better, as well as that of affording the noblest subjects for it, in those famous verses,—

Excent alii spirantia mollius sera,
Credo euidem, vivos ducent de marmore voltus;
Orabunt causas melius, cælique meatus
Desribent radio, et surgentia sidera dicent:
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,
Hae tibi erunt artes, pacique imponere morem;
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

Where the different excellencies of the two nations are so finely touched : but he would have weakened perhaps by lengthening, and have flattened the climax. Open Herodotus, you are entertained by an agreeable story-teller, who meant to entertain, and nothing more. Read Thucydides or Xenophon, you are taught indeed as well as entertained ; and the statesman or the general, the philosopher or the orator, speaks to you in every page. They wrote on subjects on which they were well informed, and they treated them fully ; they maintained the dignity of history, and thought it beneath them to vamp up old traditions, like the writers of their age and country, and to be the trumpeters of a lying antiquity. The Cyropædia of Xenophon may be objected perhaps ; but if he gave it for a romance, not an history, as he might for aught we can tell, it is out of the case ; and if he gave it for an history not a romance, I should prefer his authority to that of Herodotus or any other of his countrymen. But however this might be, and whatever merit we may justly ascribe to these two writers, who were almost single in their kind, and who treated but small portions of history ; certain it is in general, that the levity as well as loquacity of the Greeks made them incapable of keeping up to the true standard of history ; and even Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus must bow to the great Roman authors. Many principal men of that commonwealth wrote memorials of their own actions and their own times : Sylla, Cæsar, Labienus, Pollio, Augustus, and others. What writers of memorials, what compilers of the *materia historica* were these ? What genius was necessary to finish up the pictures that such masters had sketched ? Rome afforded men that were equal to the task. Let the remains, the precious remains, of Salust, of Livy, and of Tacitus, witness this truth. When Tacitus wrote, even the appearances of virtue had been long proscribed, and taste was grown corrupt as well as manners. Yet history preserved her integrity and her lustre. She preserved them in the writings of some whom Tacitus mentions, in none perhaps more than his own ; every line of which outweighs whole pages of such a rhetor as Famianus Strada. I single him out among the moderns, because he had the foolish presumption to censure Tacitus, and to write history himself ; and your lordship will forgive this short excursion in honour of a favourite author.

What a school of private and public virtue had been opened to us at

the resurrection of letters, if the latter historians of the Roman commonwealth, and the first of the succeeding monarchy, had come down to us entire? The few that are come down, though broken and imperfect, compose the best body of history that we have, nay, the only body of ancient history that deserves to be an object of study. It fails us indeed most at that remarkable and fatal period where our reasonable curiosity is raised the highest. Livy employed five-and-forty books to bring his history down to the end of the sixth century and the breaking out of the third Punic war; but he employed ninety-five to bring it down from thence to the death of Drusus; that is, through the course of one hundred and twenty or thirty years. Appion, Dion Cassius, and others, nay, even Plutarch included, make us but poor amends for what is lost of Livy. Among all the adventitious helps by which we endeavour to supply this loss in some degree, the best are those that we find scattered up and down in the works of Tully. His orations particularly, and his letters, contain many curious anecdotes and instructive reflections concerning the intrigues and machinations that were carried on against liberty, from Catiline's conspiracy to Cæsar's. The state of the government, the constitution and temper of the several parties, and the characters of the principal persons who figured at that time on the public stage, are to be seen there in a stronger and truer light than they would have appeared perhaps if he had written purposely on this subject, and even in those memorials which he somewhere promises Atticus to write. 'Excludam aliquod 'Heraclidium opus, quod lateat in thesauris tuis.' He would hardly have unmasked in such a work, as freely as in familiar occasional letters, Pompey, Cato, Brutus, nay himself; the four men of Rome, on whose praises he dwelt with the greatest complacency. The age in which Livy flourished abounded with such materials as these: they were fresh, they were authentic; it was easy to procure them, it was safe to employ them. How he did employ them in executing the second part of his design, we may judge by his execution of the first; and I own to your lordship I should be glad to exchange, if it were possible, what we have of this history for what we have not. Would you not be glad, my lord, to see in one stupendous draught the whole progress of that government from liberty to servitude? the whole series of causes and effects, apparent and real, public and private? those which all men saw, and all good men lamented and opposed at the time; and those which were so disguised to the prejudices, to the partialities of a divided people, and even to the corruption of mankind, that many did not, and that many could pretend they did not, discern them till it was too late to resist them? I am sorry to say it, this part of the Roman story would be not only more curious and more authentic than the former, but of more immediate and more important application to the present state of Britain. But it

is lost: the loss is irreparable, and your lordship will not blame me for deplored it.

III. They who set up for scepticism may not regret the loss of such an history; but this I will be bold to assert to them, that an history must be written on this plan, and must aim at least at these perfections, or it will answer sufficiently none of the intentions of history. That it will not answer sufficiently the intention I have insisted upon in these letters, that of instructing posterity by the examples of former ages, is manifest; and I think it is as manifest that an history cannot be said even to relate faithfully and inform us truly that does not relate fully, and inform us of all that is necessary to make a true judgment concerning the matters contained in it. Naked facts, without the causes that produced them and the circumstances that accompanied them, are not sufficient to characterise actions or counsels. The nice degrees of wisdom and of folly, of virtue and of vice, will not only be undiscoverable in them; but we must be very often unable to determine under which of these characters they fall in general. The sceptics I am speaking of are therefore guilty of this absurdity: the nearer an history comes to the true idea of history, the better it informs and the more it instructs us, the more worthy to be rejected it appears to them. I have said and allowed enough to content any reasonable man about the uncertainty of history. I have owned that the best are defective, and I will add in this place an observation which did not, I think, occur to me before. Conjecture is not always distinguished, perhaps, as it ought to be; so that an ingenious writer may sometimes do very innocently, what a malicious writer does very criminally, as often as he dares and as his malice requires it: he may account for events after they have happened by a system of causes and conduct that did not really produce them, though it might possibly or even probably have produced them. But this observation, like several others, becomes a reason for examining and comparing authorities, and for preferring some, not for rejecting all. Davila, a noble historian surely, and one whom I should not scruple to confess equal in many respects to Livy, as I should not scruple to prefer his countryman Guicciardin to Thucydides in every respect; Davila, my lord, was accused from the first publication of his history, or at least was suspected, of too much refinement and subtlety in developing the secret motives of actions, in laying the causes of events too deep, and deducing them often through a series of progression too complicated, and too artistically wrought. But yet the suspicious person who should reject this historian upon such general inducements as these, would have no grace to oppose his suspicions to the authority of the first Duke of Epernon, who had been an actor, and a principal actor too, in many of the scenes that Davila recites. Girard, secretary to this duke, and no contemptible biographer, relates, that this history

came down to the place where the old man resided in Gascony, a little before his death; that he read it to him, that the duke confirmed the truth of the narrations in it, and seemed only surprised by what means the author could be so well informed of the most secret councils and measures of those times.

IV. I have said enough on this head; and your lordship may be induced, perhaps, by what I have said, to think with me, that such histories as these, whether ancient or modern, deserve alone to be studied. Let us leave the credulous learned to write history without materials, or to study those who do so; to wrangle about ancient traditions, and to ring different changes on the same set of bells. Let us leave the sceptics, in modern as well as ancient history, to triumph in the notable discovery of the ides of one month mistaken for the calends of another, or in the various dates and contradictory circumstances which they find in weekly gazettes and monthly mercuries. Whilst they are thus employed, your lordship and I will proceed, if you please, to consider more closely than we have yet done the rule mentioned above: that, I mean, of using discernment and choice in the study of the most authentic history; that of not wandering in the light, which is as necessary as that of not groping in the dark.

Man is the subject of every history; and to know him well we must see him and consider him, as history alone can present him to us, in every age, in every country, in every state, in life and in death. History therefore of all kinds, of civilized and uncivilized, of ancient and modern nations, in short all history that descends to a sufficient detail of human actions and characters, is useful to bring us acquainted with our species, nay with ourselves. To teach and to inculcate the general principles of virtue, and the general rules of wisdom and good policy, which result from such details of actions and characters, comes for the most part, and always should come, expressly and directly into the design of those who are capable of giving such details; and therefore whilst they narrate as historians they hint often as philosophers, they put into our hands as it were, on every proper occasion, the end of a clue that serves to remind us of searching, and to guide us in the search of that truth which the example before us either establishes or illustrates. If a writer neglects this part, we are able however to supply his neglect by our own attention and industry, and when he gives us a good history of Peruvians or Mexicans, of Chinese or Tartars, of Muscovites or Negroes, we may blame him, but we must blame ourselves much more, if we do not make it a good lesson of philosophy. This being the general use of history, it is not to be neglected. Every one may make it who is able to read and to reflect on what he reads, and every one who makes it will find in his degree the benefit that arises from an early acquaintance contracted in this manner with mankind. We are not only passengers or sojourners in this world, but we

are absolute strangers at the first steps we make in it. Our guides are often ignorant, often unfaithful. By this map of the country which history spreads before us, we may learn if we please, to guide ourselves. In our journey through it we are beset on every side. We are besieged sometimes even in our strongest holds. Terrors and temptations, conducted by the passions of other men, assault us, and our own passions that correspond with these, betray us. History is a collection of the journals of those who have travelled through the same country and been exposed to the same accidents, and their good and their ill success are equally instructive. In this pursuit of knowledge an immense field is spread to us: general histories, sacred and profane; the histories of particular countries, particular events, particular orders, particular men; memorials, anecdotes, travels. But we must not ramble in this field without discernment or choice, nor even with these must we ramble too long.

As to the choice of authors who have written on all these various subjects, so much has been said by learned men concerning all those that deserve attention, and their several characters are so well established, that it would be a sort of pedantic affectation to lead your lordship through so voluminous, and at the same time so easy a detail. I pass it over therefore in order to observe that as soon as we have taken this general view of mankind, and of the course of human affairs in different ages and different parts of the world, we ought to apply, and, the shortness of human life considered, to confine ourselves almost entirely in our study of history, to such histories as have an immediate relation to our professions, or to our rank and situation in the society to which we belong. Let me instance the profession of divinity, as the noblest and the most important.

(1) I have said so much concerning the share which divines of all religions have taken in the corruption of history, that I should have anathemas pronounced against me, no doubt, in the east and the west by the dairo, the mufti, and the pope, if these letters were submitted to ecclesiastical censure; for surely, my lord, the clergy have a better title than the sons of Apollo to be called *genus irritabile vatum*. What would it be, if I went about to show how many of the Christian clergy abuse by misrepresentation and false quotation the history they can no longer corrupt? and yet this task would not be even to me a hard one. But as I mean to speak in this place of Christian divines alone, so I mean to speak of such of them particularly as may be called divines without any sneer; of such of them, for some such I think there are, as believe themselves and would have mankind believe, not for temporal but spiritual interest, nor for the sake of the clergy, but for the sake of mankind. Now it has been long matter of astonishment to me how such persons as these could take so much silly pains to establish mystery on metaphysics, revelation on philosophy, and

matters of fact on abstract reasoning? A religion founded on the authority of a Divine mission, confirmed by prophecies and miracles, appeals to facts, and the facts must be proved as all other facts that pass for authentic are proved: for faith, so reasonable after this proof, is absurd before it. If they are thus proved, the religion will prevail without the assistance of so much profound reasoning; if they are not thus proved, the authority of it will sink in the world even with such assistance. The divines object in their disputes with atheists, and they object very justly, that these men require improper proofs, proofs that are not suited to the nature of the subject, and then cavil that such proofs are not furnished. But what then do they mean, to fall into the same absurdity themselves in their disputes with theists, and to din improper proofs in ears that are open to proper proofs? The matter is of great moment, my lord, and I make no excuse for the zeal which obliges me to dwell a little on it. A serious and honest application to the study of ecclesiastical history and every part of profane history and chronology relative to it, is incumbent on such reverend persons as are here spoken of, on a double account, because history alone can furnish the proper proofs that the religion they teach is of God, and because the unfair manner in which these proofs have been and are daily furnished, creates prejudices and gives advantages against Christianity that require to be removed. No scholar will dare to deny, that false history, as well as sham miracles, has been employed to propagate Christianity formerly, and whoever examines the writers of our own age will find the same abuse of history continued. Many and many instances of this abuse might be produced. It is grown into custom; writers copy one another, and the mistake that was committed, or the falsehood that was invented, by one is adopted by hundreds.

Abbadie says in his famous book, that the Gospel of St. Matthew is cited by Clemens Bishop of Rome, a disciple of the apostles; that Barnabas cites it in his epistle, that Ignatius and Polycarpe receive it; and that the same fathers that give testimony for Matthew give it likewise for Mark. Nay, your lordship will find I believe, that the present Bishop of London in his third pastoral letter speaks to the same effect. I will not trouble you nor myself with any more instances of the same kind. Let this which occurred to me as I was writing suffice. It may well suffice, for I presume the fact advanced by the minister and the bishop is a mistake. If the fathers of the first century do mention some passages that are agreeable to what we read in our evangelists, will it follow that these fathers had the same gospels before them? To say so is a manifest abuse of history, and quite inexcusable in writers that knew, or should have known, that these fathers made use of other gospels, wherein such passages might be contained, or they might be preserved in unwritten tradition. Besides which I could almost venture to affirm that these fathers of the first century do not expressly

name the gospels we have of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. To the two reasons that have been given why those who make divinity their profession should study history, particularly ecclesiastical history, with an honest and serious application, in order to support Christianity against the attacks of unbelievers, and to remove the doubts and prejudices that the unfair proceedings of men of their own order have raised in minds candid but not implicit, willing to be informed but curious to examine; to these I say we may add another consideration that seems to me of no small importance. Writers of the Roman religion have attempted to show that the text of the Holy Writ is on many accounts insufficient to be the sole criterion of orthodoxy, I apprehend too that they have shown it. Writers of the reformed religion have erected their batteries against tradition, and the only difficulty they had to encounter in this enterprise lay in levelling and pointing their cannon so as to avoid demolishing in one common ruin the traditions they retain and those they reject. Each side has been employed to weaken the cause and explode the system of his adversary. ‘The text has ‘not that authenticity, clearness, and precision which are necessary to ‘establish it as a Divine and a certain rule of faith and practice, and ‘the tradition of the church, from the first ages of it till the days of ‘Luther and Calvin, has been corrupted itself and has served to corrupt ‘the faith and practice of Christians.’ Whilst the authenticity and sense of the text of the Bible remain as disputable, and whilst the tradition of the church remains as problematical, to say no worse, as the immense labours of the Christian divines in several communions have made them appear to be; Christianity may lean on the civil and ecclesiastical power, and be supported by the forcible influence of education: but the proper force of religion, that force which subdues the mind and awes the conscience by conviction, will be wanting.

I had reason therefore to produce divinity, as one instance of those professions that require a particular application to the study of some particular parts of history: and since I have said so much on the subject in my zeal for Christianity, I will add this further. The resurrection of letters was a fatal period: the Christian system has been attacked and wounded too very severely since that time. The defence has been better made indeed by modern divines, than it had been by ancient fathers and apologists. The moderns have invented new methods of defence, and have abandoned some posts that were not tenable; but still there are others, in defending which they lie under great disadvantages. Such are various facts, piously believed in former times, but on which the truth of Christianity has been rested very imprudently in more enlightened ages; because the falsity of some, and the gross improbability of others are so evident, that instead of answering the purpose for which they were invented, they have rendered the whole tenor of ecclesiastical history and traditions

precarious, ever since a strict but just application of the rules of criticism has been made to them. I touch these things lightly ; but if your lordship reflects upon them, you will find reason perhaps to think as I do, that it is high time the clergy in all Christian communions should join their forces, and establish those historical facts, which are the foundations of the whole system, on clear and unquestionable historical authority, such as they require in all cases of moment from others ; reject candidly what cannot be thus established ; and pursue their inquiries in the same spirit of truth through all the ages of the church ; without any regard to historians, fathers, or councils, more than they are strictly entitled to on the face of what they have transmitted to us, on their own consistency, and on the concurrence of other authority. Our pastors would be thus, I presume, much better employed than they generally are. Those of the clergy who make religion merely a trade, who regard nothing more than the subsistence it affords them, or in higher life the wealth and power they enjoy by the means of it, may say to themselves that it will last their time, or that policy and reason of state will preserve the form of a church when the spirit of religion is extinct. But those whom I mentioned above, those who act for spiritual not temporal ends, and are desirous that men should believe and practise the doctrines of Christianity as well as go to church and pay tithes, will feel and own the weight of such considerations as these ; and agree that however the people have been and may be still amused, yet Christianity has been in decay ever since the resurrection of letters ; and that it cannot be supported as it was supported before that era, nor by any other way than that which I propose, and which a due application to the study of history, chronology, and criticism, would enable our divines to pursue, no doubt, with success.

I might instance, in other professions, the obligations men lie under of applying themselves to certain parts of history, and I can hardly forbear doing it in that of the law ; in its nature the noblest and most beneficial to mankind, in its abuse and debasement the most sordid and the most pernicious. A lawyer now is nothing more, I speak of ninety-nine in a hundred at least, to use some of Tully's words, ' nisi 'leguleius quidam, cautus et acutus, præco actionum, cantor formularum, auceps syllabarum.' But there have been lawyers that were orators, philosophers, historians : there have been Bacons and Clarendons, my lord. There will be none such any more, till in some better age, true ambition or the love of fame prevails over avarice ; and till men find leisure and encouragement to prepare themselves for the exercise of this profession, by climbing up to the *vantage ground*, so my lord Bacon calls it, of science ; instead of grovelling all their lives below, in a mean but gainful application to all the little arts of chicane. Till this happen, the profession of the law will scarce deserve to be ranked among the learned professions ; and whenever it happens, one of the

vantage grounds, to which men must climb, is metaphysical, and the other historical knowledge. They must pry into the secret recesses of the human heart, and become well acquainted with the whole moral world, that they may discover the abstract reason of all laws ; and they must trace the laws of particular states, especially of their own, from the first rough sketches to the more perfect draughts ; from the first causes or occasions that produced them, through all the effects good and bad that they produced. But I am running insensibly into a subject, which would detain me too long from one that relates more immediately to your lordship, and with which I intend to conclude this long letter.

(2) I pass from the consideration of those professions to which particular parts or kinds of history seem to belong ; and I come to speak of the study of history, as a necessary mean to prepare men for the discharge of that duty which they owe to their country, and which is common to all the members of every society that is constituted according to the rules of right reason, and with a due regard to the common good. I have met in St. Real's works, or some other French book, with a ridicule cast on private men who make history a political study, or who apply themselves in any manner to affairs of state. But the reflection is too general. In governments so arbitrary by their constitution, that the will of the prince is not only the supreme but the sole law, it is so far from being a duty, that it may be dangerous, and must be impertinent in men, who are not called by the prince to the administration of public affairs, to concern themselves about it, or to fit themselves for it. The sole vocation there is the favour of the court ; and whatever designation God makes by the talents he bestows, though it may serve, which it seldom ever does, to direct the choice of the prince, yet I presume that it cannot become a reason to particular men, or create a duty on them, to devote themselves to the public service. Look on the Turkish government. See a fellow taken, from rowing in a common passage-boat, by the caprice of the prince ; see him invested next day with all the power the soldans took under the caliphs, or the mayors of the palace under the successors of Clovis ; see a whole empire governed by the ignorance, inexperience, and arbitrary will of this tyrant, and a few other subordinate tyrants, as ignorant and inexperienced as himself. In France indeed, though an absolute government, things go a little better. Arts and sciences are encouraged, and here and there an example may be found of a man who has risen by some extraordinary talents, amidst innumerable examples of men who have arrived at the greatest honours and highest posts by no other merit than that of assiduous fawning, attendance, or of skill in some despicable puerile amusement ; in training wasps, for instance, to take regular flights like hawks, and stoop at flies. The nobility of France, like the children of tribute

among the ancient Saracens and modern Turks, are set apart for wars. They are bred to make love, to hunt, and to fight ; and if any of them should acquire knowledge superior to this, they would acquire that which might be prejudicial to themselves, but could not become beneficial to their country. The affairs of state are trusted to other hands. Some have risen to them by drudging long in business ; some have been made ministers almost in the cradle ; and the whole power of the government has been abandoned to others in the dotage of life. There is a monarchy, an absolute monarchy too, I mean that of China, wherein the administration of the government is carried on under the direction of the prince, ever since the dominion of the Tartars has been established, by several classes of mandarins, and according to the deliberation and advice of several orders of councils ; the admission to which classes and orders depends on the abilities of the candidates, as their rise in them depends on the behaviour they hold, and the improvements they make afterwards. Under such a government, it is neither impertinent nor ridiculous, in any of the subjects who are invited by their circumstances, or pushed to it by their talents, to make the history of their own and of other countries a political study, and to fit themselves by this and all other ways for the service of the public. It is not dangerous neither, or an honour that outweighs the danger attends it : since private men have a right by the ancient constitution of this government, as well as councils of state, to represent to the prince the abuses of his administration. But still men have not there the same occasion to concern themselves in the affairs of the state, as the nature of a free government gives to the members of it. In our own country, for in our own the forms of a free government at least are hitherto preserved, men are not only designed for the public service by the circumstances of their situation, and their talents, all which may happen in others ; but they are designed to it by their birth in many cases, and in all cases they may dedicate themselves to this service, and take in different degrees some share in it, whether they are called to it by the prince or no. In absolute governments, all public service is to the prince, and he nominates all those that serve the public. In free governments, there is a distinct and a principal service due to the state. Even the king, of such a limited monarchy as ours, is but the first servant of the people. Among his subjects, some are appointed by the constitution, and others are elected by the people, to carry on the exercise of the legislative power jointly with him, and to control the executive power independently on him. Thus your lordship is born a member of that order of men, in whom a third part of the supreme power of the government resides : and your right to the exercise of the power belonging to this order not being yet opened, you are chosen into another body of men who have different power and a different constitution, but who possess another third part of the supreme

legislative authority, for as long a time as the commission or trust delegated to them by the people lasts. Freemen who are neither born to the first, nor elected to the last, have a right however to complain, to represent, to petition, and I add even to do more in cases of the utmost extremity. For sure there cannot be a greater absurdity, than to affirm that the people have a remedy in resistance when their prince attempts to enslave them, but that they have none when their representatives sell themselves and them.

The sum of what I have been saying is, that in free governments, the public service is not confined to those whom the prince appoints to different posts in the administration under him; that there the care of the state is the care of multitudes; that many are called to it in a particular manner by their rank, and by other circumstances of their situation; and that even those whom the prince appoints are not only answerable to him, but like him, and before him, to the nation, for their behaviour in their several posts. It can never be impertinent nor ridiculous therefore in such a country, whatever it might be in the Abbot of St. Real's, which was Savoy I think; or in Peru, under the Incas, where Garcilasso de la Vega says it was lawful for none but the nobility to study—for men of all degrees to instruct themselves in those affairs wherein they may be actors, or judges of those that act, or controllers of those that judge. On the contrary, it is incumbent on every man to instruct himself, as well as the means and opportunities he has permit, concerning the nature and interests of the government, and those rights and duties that belong to him, or to his superiors, or to his inferiors. This in general; but in particular, it is certain that the obligations under which we lie to serve our country increase in proportion to the ranks we hold, and the other circumstances of birth, fortune, and situation, that call us to this service; and above all to the talents which God has given us to perform it.

It is in this view that I shall address to your lordship whatever I have further to say on the study of history.

LETTER VI.

ON THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

From what period modern history is peculiarly useful to the service of our country, viz., from the end of the fifteenth century to the present. The division of this into three particular periods: in order to a sketch of the history and state of Europe from that time.

SINCE then you are, my lord, by your birth, by the nature of our government, and by the talents God has given you, attached for life to

the service of your country; since genius alone cannot enable you to go through this service with honour to yourself and advantage to your country, whether you support or whether you oppose the administrations that arise; since a great stock of knowledge, acquired betimes and continually improved, is necessary to this end; and since one part of this stock must be collected from the study of history, as the other part is to be gained by observation and experience,—I come now to speak to your lordship of such history as has an immediate relation to the great duty and business of your life, and of the method to be observed in this study. The notes I have by me, which were of some little use thus far, serve me no farther, and I have no books to consult. No matter; I shall be able to explain my thoughts without their assistance, and less liable to be tedious. I hope to be as full and as exact on memory alone, as the manner in which I shall treat the subject requires me to be.

I say then, that however closely affairs are linked together in the progression of governments, and how much soever events that follow are dependent on those that precede, the whole connection diminishes to sight as the chain lengthens; till at last it seems to be broken, and the links that are continued from that point bear no proportion nor any similitude to the former. I would not be understood to speak only of those great changes that are wrought by a concurrence of extraordinary events; for instance the expulsion of one nation, the destruction of one government, and the establishment of another: but even of those that are wrought in the same governments and among the same people, slowly and almost imperceptibly, by the necessary effects of time, and flux condition of human affairs. When such changes as these happen in several states about the same time, and consequently affect other states by their vicinity, and by many different relations which they frequently bear to one another; then is one of those periods formed, at which the chain spoken of is so broken as to have little or no real or visible connection with that which we see continue. A new situation, different from the former, begets new interests in the same proportion of difference; not in this or that particular state alone, but in all those that are concerned by vicinity or other relations, as I said just now, in one general system of policy. New interests beget new maxims of government and new methods of conduct. These, in their turns, beget new manners, new habits, new customs. The longer this new constitution of affairs continues, the more will this difference increase; and although some analogy may remain long between what preceded and what succeeds such a period, yet will this analogy soon become an object of mere curiosity, not of profitable inquiry. Such a period therefore is, in the true sense of the words, an epocha or an era, a point of time at which you stop, or from which you reckon forward. I say forward, because we are

not to study in the present case, as chronologers compute, backward. Should we persist to carry our researches much higher, and to push them even to some other period of the same kind, we should misemploy our time: the causes then laid having spent themselves, the series of effects derived from them being over, and our concern in both consequently at an end. But a new system of causes and effects, that subsists in our time, and whereof our conduct is to be a part, arising at the last period, and all that passes in our time being dependent on what has passed since that period, or being immediately relative to it, we are extremely concerned to be well informed about all those passages. To be entirely ignorant about the ages that precede this era would be shameful. Nay some indulgence may be had to a temperate curiosity in the review of them. But to be learned about them is a ridiculous affectation in any man who means to be useful to the present age. Down to this era let us read history: from this era, and down to our own time, let us study it.

The end of the fifteenth century seems to be just such a period as I have been describing, for those who live in the eighteenth, and who inhabit the western parts of Europe. A little before, or a little after this point of time, all those events happened, and all those revolutions began, that have produced so vast a change in the manners, customs, and interests of particular nations, and in the whole policy ecclesiastical and civil of these parts of the world. I must descend here into some detail, not of histories, collections, or memorials; for all these are well enough known: and though the contents are in the heads of few, the books are in the hands of many. But instead of showing your lordship where to look, I shall contribute more to your instruction, by marking out, as well as my memory will serve me to do it, what you are to look for, and by furnishing a kind of clue to your studies. I shall give, according to custom, the first place to religion.

A view of the ecclesiastical government of Europe from the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Observe then, my lord, that the demolition of the papal throne was not attempted with success till the beginning of the sixteenth century. If you are curious to cast your eyes back, you will find Berenger in the eleventh, who was soon silenced; Arnoldus in the same, who was soon hanged; Valdo in the twelfth, and our Wickliff in the fourteenth, as well as others perhaps whom I do not recollect. Sometimes the doctrines of the church were alone attacked, and sometimes the doctrine, the discipline, and the usurpations of the pope. But little fires, kindled in corners of a dark world, were soon stifled by that great abettor of Christian unity, the hangman. When they spread and blazed out, as

in the case of the Albigeois and of the Hussites, armies were raised to extinguish them by torrents of blood; and such saints as Dominic, with the crucifix in their hands, instigated the troops to the utmost barbarity. Your lordship will find that the church of Rome was maintained by such charitable and salutary means, among others, till the period spoken of; and you will be curious, I am sure, to inquire how this period came to be more fatal to her than any former conjuncture. A multitude of circumstances, which you will easily trace in the histories of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, to go no further back, concurred to bring about this great event; and a multitude of others, as easy to be traced, concurred to hinder the demolition from becoming total, and to prop the tottering fabric. Among these circumstances, there is one less complicated and more obvious than others, which was of principal and universal influence. The art of printing had been invented about forty or fifty years before the period we fix; from that time, the resurrection of letters hastened on apace; and at this period they had made great progress, and were cultivated with great application. Mahomet II. drove them out of the east into the west; and the popes proved worse politicians than the musties in this respect. Nicholas V. encouraged learning and learned men. Sixtus IV. was, if I mistake not, a great collector of books at least; and Leo X. was the patron of every art and science. The magicians themselves broke the charm by which they had bound mankind for so many ages; and the adventure of that knight-errant, who, thinking himself happy in the arms of a celestial nymph, found that he was the miserable slave of an infernal hag, was in some sort renewed. As soon as the means of acquiring and spreading information grew common, it is no wonder that a system was unravelled, which could not have been woven with success in any ages, but those of gross ignorance and credulous superstition. I might point out to your lordship many other immediate causes, some general like this that I have mentioned, and some particular. The great schism, for instance, that ended in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and in the council of Constance, had occasioned prodigious scandal. Two or three vicars of Christ, two or three infallible heads of the church, roaming about the world at a time, furnished matter of ridicule as well as scandal; and whilst they appealed, for so they did in effect, to the laity, and reproached and excommunicated one another, they taught the world what to think of the institution as well as exercise of the papal authority. The same lesson was taught by the council of Pisa that preceded, and by that of Basle that followed, the council of Constance. The horrid crimes of Alexander VI., the saucy ambition of Julius II., the immense profusion and scandalous exactions of Leo X.—all these events and characters, following in a continued series from the beginning of one century, prepared the way for the revolution that happened in the beginning of the next. The

domestic troubles of his reign, and the defection from his alliance, much more than by the man who seems to have been neither a greater hero than Henry VI.; and even than by the vigour and nobility in his service. After Lewis came to make a show of carrying the war again into France, he turned home, and your lordship will not be at a loss to offer better reasons for his doing so, in the situation of characters of his allies, than those which Philip of Burgundy gave to the artifice of Lewis, from his good cheer and from this time our pretensions on France were in full blast. Charles the Bold, the last prince of the house of Burgundy, had no vassal able to molest him. He added the duchy of Burgundy and Artois to his crown, he acquired the duchy of Brittany by marriage: and thus France was reduced to a few years into that great and compact body which it is at this time. The history of France, before this time, is the history of Germany, a complicated history of several states, sometimes conccurring like members of the same body, and sometimes warring on one another. Since this time the history of France is the history of one state under a uniform and orderly government; the history of a prince who is possessor of some, as well as lord of all. Yes; and, the authority of many tyrants centring in one person, people are not become more free, yet the whole system of policy is entirely changed. Peace at home is better than war abroad. The government of provinces and of strong fortresses have opposed their arms against his authority and commission since that there is no more resemblance between the authority and the power of these governors, or the nature and occasions of these than there is between the ancient and the modern governments of France. In a word, the constitution is so altered, that knowledge we can acquire about it, in the history that period, will serve to little purpose in our study of the history of France. It is not the present age, and to less purpose still in assisting us to judge of what the present age. The kings of France since that time, more than ever before, have been able to exert themselves more abroad: they began to do so immediately; for Charles VIII., son and successor of Lewis XI., formed great designs of foreign conquest, though disappointed by his inability, by the levity of the nation, and other causes. Lewis XII. and Francis I., but especially Francis, in the affairs of Europe, and though the superior genius

of Ferdinand, called the Catholic, and the star of Charles V. prevailed against them, yet the efforts they made show sufficiently how the strength and importance of this monarchy were increased in their time. From whence we may date likewise the rivalship of the house of France, for we may reckon that of Valois and that of Bourbon as one upon this occasion, and the house of Austria, that continues at this day, and that has cost so much blood and so much treasure in the course of it.

II. IN ENGLAND.—Though the power and influence of the nobility sunk in the great change that began under Henry VII. in England, as they did in that which began under Lewis XI. in France; yet the new constitutions that these changes produced were very different. In France, the lords alone lost, the king alone gained ; the clergy held their possessions and their immunities, and the people remained in a state of mitigated slavery. But in England the people gained as well as the crown. The commons had already a share in the legislature; so that the power and influence of the lords being broken by Henry VII., and the property of the commons increasing by the sale that his son made of church lands, the power of the latter increased, of course, by this change in a constitution, the forms whereof were favourable to them. The union of the roses put an end to the civil wars of York and Lancaster, that had succeeded those we commonly call the Barons' Wars ; and the humour of warring in France, that had lasted near four hundred years under the Normans and Plantagenets, for plunder as well as conquest, was spent. Our temple of Janus was shut by Henry VII. We neither laid waste our own or other countries any longer; and wise laws and a wise government changed insensibly the manners, and gave a new turn to the spirit of our people. We were no longer the freebooters we had been. Our nation maintained her reputation in arms whenever the public interest or the public authority required it; but war ceased to be what it had been, our principal and almost our sole profession. The arts of peace prevailed among us. We became husbandmen, manufacturers, and merchants, and we emulated neighbouring nations in literature. It is from this time that we ought to study the history of our country, my lord, with the utmost application. We are not much concerned to know with critical accuracy what were the ancient forms of our parliaments, concerning which, however, there is little room for dispute from the reign of Henry III. at least; nor in short the whole system of our civil constitution before Henry VII., and of our ecclesiastical constitution before Henry VIII. But he who has not studied and acquired a thorough knowledge of them both from these periods down to the present time, in all the variety of events by which they have been affected, will be very unfit to judge or to take care of either. Just as little are we concerned to know, in any nice detail, what the conduct of our princes, relatively to their neighbours on the continent, was before this period,

and at a time when the partition of power and a multitude of other circumstances rendered the whole political system of Europe so vastly different from that which has existed since. But he who has not traced this conduct from the period we fix down to the present age, wants a principal part of the knowledge that every English minister of state should have. Ignorance in the respects here spoken of is the less pardonable, because we have more and more authentic means of information concerning this than concerning any other period. Anecdotes enough to glut the curiosity of some persons, and to silence all the captious cavils of others, will never be furnished by any portion of history; nor indeed can they, according to the nature and course of human affairs; but he who is content to read and observe, like a senator and a statesman, will find in our own and in foreign historians as much information as he wants concerning the affairs of our island, her fortune at home and her conduct abroad, from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth. I refer to foreign historians as well as to our own, for this series of our own history, not only because it is reasonable to see in what manner the historians of other countries have related the transactions wherein we have been concerned, and what judgment they have made of our conduct, domestic and foreign, but for another reason likewise. Our nation has furnished as ample and as important matter, good and bad, for history as any nation under the sun; and yet we must yield the palm in writing history most certainly to the Italians and to the French, and I fear even to the Germans. The only two pieces of history we have, in any respect to be compared with the ancient, are, the reign of Henry VII., by my Lord Bacon, and the history of our civil wars in the last century by your noble ancestor, my Lord Chancellor Clarendon. But we have no general history to be compared with some of other countries; neither have we, which I lament much more, particular histories, except the two I have mentioned, nor writers of memorials, nor collectors of monuments and anecdotes, to vie in number or in merit with those that foreign nations can boast, from Commines, Guicciardin, Du Bellay, Paolo, Davila, Thuanus, and a multitude of others, down through the whole period that I propose to your lordship. But although this be true to our shame, yet it is true likewise that we want no necessary means of information. They lie open to our industry and our discernment. Foreign writers are for the most part scarce worth reading when they speak of our domestic affairs; nor are our English writers, for the most part, of greater value when they speak of foreign affairs. In this mutual defect the writers of other countries are, I think, more excusable than ours; for the nature of our government, the political principles in which we are bred, our distinct interest as islanders, and the complicated various interests and humours of our parties, all these are so peculiar to ourselves, and so different from the notions, manners, and

habits of other nations, that it is not wonderful they should be puzzled or should fall into error, when they undertake to give relations of events that result from all these, or to pass any judgment upon them. But as these historians are mutually defective, so they mutually supply each others defects. We must compare them, therefore, make use of our discernment, and draw our conclusions from both. If we proceed in this manner, we have an ample fund of history in our power, from whence to collect sufficient authentic information; and we must proceed in this manner, even with our own historians of different religions, sects, and parties, or run the risk of being misled by domestic ignorance and prejudice in this case, as well as by foreign ignorance and prejudice in the other.

III. IN SPAIN AND THE EMPIRE.—Spain figured little in Europe till the latter part of the fifteenth century; till Castile and Arragon were united by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella; till the total expulsion of the Moors, and till the discovery of the West Indies. After this, not only Spain took a new form and grew into immense power, but the heir of Ferdinand and Isabella, being heir likewise of the houses of Burgundy and Austria, such an extent of dominion accrued to him by all these successions, and such an addition of rank and authority by his election to the empire, as no prince had been master of in Europe from the days of Charles the Great. It is proper to observe here how the policy of the Germans altered in the choice of an emperor, because the effects of this alteration have been great. When Rodolphus of Hapsburg was chosen in the year 1270, or about that time, the poverty and the low estate of this prince, who had been marshal of the court to a king of Bohemia, was an inducement to elect him. The disorderly and lawless state of the empire made the princes of it in those days unwilling to have a more powerful head. But a contrary maxim took place at this era: Charles V. and Francis I., the two most powerful princes of Europe, were the sole candidates; for the elector of Saxony, who is said to have declined, was rather unable to stand in competition with them; and Charles was chosen by the unanimous suffrages of the electoral college, if I mistake not. Another Charles, Charles IV., who was made emperor illegally enough on the deposition of Lewis of Bavaria, and about one hundred and fifty years before, seems to me to have contributed doubly to establish this maxim, by the wise constitutions that he procured to pass, that united the empire in a more orderly form and better system of government; and by alienating the imperial revenues to such a degree, that they were no longer sufficient to support an emperor who had not great revenues of his own. The same maxim and other circumstances have concurred to keep the empire in this family ever since, as it had been often before; and this family having large dominions in the empire, and larger pretensions as well as dominions out of it, the other states

of Europe, France, Spain, and England particularly, have been more concerned since this period in the affairs of Germany than they were before it; and by consequence the history of Germany, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, is of importance, and a necessary part of that knowledge which your lordship desires to acquire.

The Dutch commonwealth was not formed till near a century later. But as soon as it was formed, nay even whilst it was forming, these provinces that were lost to observation, among the many that composed the dominions of Burgundy and Austria, became so considerable a part of the political system of Europe, that their history must be studied by every man who would inform himself of this system.

Soon after this state had taken being, others of a more ancient original began to mingle in those disputes and wars, those councils, negociations, and treaties, that are to be the principal objects of your lordship's application in the study of history. That of the northern crowns deserves your attention little before the last century. Till the election of Frederic I. to the crown of Denmark, and till that wonderful revolution which the first Gustavus brought about in Sweden, it is nothing more than a confused rhapsody of events, in which the great kingdoms and states of Europe neither had any concern, nor took any part. From the time I have mentioned, the northern crowns have turned their counsels and their arms often southwards, and Sweden particularly with prodigious effect.

To what purpose should I trouble your lordship with the mention of histories of other nations? They are either such as have no relation to the knowledge you would acquire, like that of the Poles, the Muscovites, or the Turks; or they are such as, having an occasional or a secondary relation to it, fall of course into your scheme; like the history of Italy for instance, which is sometimes a part of that of France, sometimes of that of Spain, and sometimes of that of Germany. The thread of history, that you are to keep, is that of the nations who are and must always be concerned in the same scenes of action with your own. These are the principal nations of the west. Things that have no immediate relation to your own country, or to them, are either too remote, or too minute, to employ much of your time; and their history and your own is, for all your purposes, the whole history of Europe.

The two great powers, that of France and that of Austria, being formed, and a rivalship established by consequence between them; it began to be the interest of their neighbours to oppose the strongest and most enterprising of the two, and to be the ally and friend of the weakest. From hence arose the notion of a balance of power in Europe, on the equal poise of which the safety and tranquillity of all must depend. To destroy the equality of this balance has been the aim of each of these rivals in his turn; and to hinder it from being destroyed, by preventing too much power from falling into one scale,

has been the principle of all the wise councils of Europe, relatively to France and to the house of Austria, through the whole period that began at the era we have fixed, and subsists at this hour. To make a careful and just observation, therefore, of the rise and decline of these powers, in the two last centuries and in the present, of the projects which their ambition formed, of the means they employed to carry these projects on with success, of the means employed by others to defeat them, of the issue of all these endeavours in war and in negociation, and particularly to bring your observations home to your own country and your own use; of the conduct that England held, to her honour or dishonour, to her advantage or disadvantage, in every one of the numerous and important conjunctures that happened—ought to be the principal subject of your lordship's attention in reading and reflecting on this part of modern history.

Now to this purpose you will find it of great use, my lord, when you have a general plan of the history in your mind, to go over the whole again in another method, which I propose to be this. Divide the entire period into such particular periods as the general course of affairs will mark out to you sufficiently, by the rise of new conjunctures, of different schemes of conduct, and of different theatres of action. Examine this period of history as you would examine a tragedy or a comedy; that is, take first the idea or a general notion of the whole, and after that examine every act and every scene apart. Consider them in themselves, and consider them relatively to one another. Read this history as you would that of any ancient period; but study it afterwards, as it would not be worth your while to study the other; nay as you could not have in your power the means of studying the other, if the study was really worth your while. The former part of this period abounds in great historians: and the latter part is so modern, that even tradition is authentic enough to supply the want of good history; if we are curious to inquire, and if we hearken to the living with the same impartiality and freedom of judgment as we read the dead: and he that does one will do the other. The whole period abounds in memorials, in collections of public acts and monuments, of private letters, and of treaties. All these must come into your plan of study, my lord: many not to be read through, but all to be consulted and compared. They must not lead you, I think, to your inquiries, but your inquiries must lead you to them. By joining history and that which we call the *materia historica* together in this manner, and by drawing your information from both, your lordship will acquire not only that knowledge which many have in some degree, of the great transactions that have passed, and the great events that have happened in Europe during this period, and of their immediate and obvious causes and consequences; but your lordship will acquire a much superior knowledge, and such a one as very few men possess almost

in any degree, a knowledge of the true political system of Europe during this time. You will see it in its primitive principles, in the constitutions of governments, the situations of countries, their national and true interests, the characters and the religion of people, and other permanent circumstances. You will trace it through all its fluctuations, and observe how the objects vary seldom, but the means perpetually, according to the different characters of princes and of those who govern, the different abilities of those who serve, the course of accidents, and a multitude of other irregular and contingent circumstances.

The particular periods into which the whole period should be divided, in my opinion, are these. 1. From the fifteenth to the end of the sixteenth century. 2. From thence to the Pyrenean treaty. 3. From thence down to the present time.

Your lordship will find this division as apt and as proper, relatively to the particular histories of England, France, Spain, and Germany, the principal nations concerned, as it is relatively to the general history of Europe.

The death of Queen Elizabeth, and the accession of King James I., made a vast alteration in the government of our nation at home, and in her conduct abroad, about the end of the first of these periods. The wars that religion occasioned, and ambition fomented, in France, through the reigns of Francis II., Charles IX., Henry III., and a part of Henry IV., ended; and the furies of the league were crushed by this great prince, about the same time. Philip II. of Spain marks this period likewise by his death, and by the exhausted condition in which he left the monarchy he governed: which took the lead no longer in disturbing the peace of mankind, but acted a second part in abetting the bigotry and ambition of Ferdinand II. and III. The thirty years war that devastated Germany did not begin till the eighteenth year of the seventeenth century, but the seeds of it were sowing some time before, and even at the end of the sixteenth. Ferdinand I. and Maximilian had shown much lenity and moderation in the disputes and troubles that arose on account of religion. Under Rodolphus and Matthias, as the succession of their cousin Ferdinand approached, the fires that were covered began to smoke and to sparkle; and if the war did not begin with this century, the preparation for it and the expectation of it did.

The second period ends in 1660, the year of the restoration of Charles II. to the throne of England; when our civil wars and all the disorders which Cromwell's usurpation had produced were over; and is a remarkable point of time, with respect to our country. It is no less remarkable with respect to Germany, Spain, and France.

As to Germany; the ambitious projects of the German branch of Austria had been entirely defeated, the peace of the empire had been restored, and almost a new constitution formed, or an old one revived,

by the treaties of Westphalia ; nay the imperial eagle was not only fallen, but her wings were clipped.

As to Spain : the Spanish branch was fallen as low twelve years afterwards, that is in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty. Philip II. left his successors a ruined monarchy. He left them something worse : he left them his example and his principles of government, founded in ambition, in pride, in ignorance, in bigotry, and all the pedantry of state. I have read somewhere or other, that the war of the Low-countries alone cost him, by his own confession, five hundred and sixty-four millions, a prodigious sum in what species soever he reckoned. Philip III. and Philip IV. followed his example and his principles of government, at home and abroad. At home, there was much form, but no good order, no economy nor wisdom of policy in the state. The church continued to devour the state, and that monster the inquisition to dispeopple the country, even more than perpetual war, and all the numerous colonies that Spain had sent to the West Indies ; for your lordship will find that Philip III. drove more than 900,000 Moriscoes out of his dominions by one edict, with such circumstances of inhumanity in the execution of it, as Spaniards alone could exercise, and that tribunal, who had provoked this unhappy race to revolt, could alone approve. Abroad, the conduct of these princes was directed by the same wild spirit of ambition ; rash in undertaking though slow to execute, and obstinate in pursuing though unable to succeed, they opened a new sluice to let out the little life and vigour that remained in their monarchy. Philip II. is said to have been piqued against his uncle Ferdinand, for refusing to yield the empire to him on the abdication of Charles V. Certain it is, that as much as he loved to disturb the peace of mankind, and to meddle in every quarrel that had the appearance of supporting the Roman, and oppressing every other church, he meddled little in the affairs of Germany. But Ferdinand and Maximilian dead, and the offspring of Maximilian extinct, the kings of Spain espoused the interests of the other branch of their family, entertained remote views of ambition in favour of their own branch, even on that side, and made all the enterprises of Ferdinand of Gratz, both before and after his elevation to the empire, the common cause of the house of Austria. What completed their ruin was this : they knew not how to lose, nor when to yield. They acknowledged the independency of the Dutch commonwealth, and became the allies of their ancient subjects at the treaty of Munster ; but they would not forego their usurped claim on Portugal, and they persisted to carry on singly the war against France. Thus they were reduced to such a lowness of power as can hardly be paralleled in any other case ; and Philip IV. was obliged at last to conclude a peace, on terms repugnant to his inclination, to that of his people, to the interest of Spain, and to that of all Europe, in the Pyrenean treaty.

As to France: this era of the entire fall of the Spanish power is likewise that from which we may reckon that France grew as formidable as we have seen her to her neighbours in power and pretensions. Henry IV. meditated great designs, and prepared to act a great part in Europe in the very beginning of this period, when Ravaillac stabbed him. His designs died with him, and are rather guessed at than known; for surely those which his historian Perefixe and the compilers of Sully's memorials ascribe to him, of a Christian commonwealth, divided into fifteen states, and of a senate to decide all differences, and to maintain this new constitution of Europe, are too chimerical to have been really his; but his general design of abasing the house of Austria, and establishing the superior power in that of Bourbon, was taken up about twenty years after his death by Richelieu, and was pursued by him and by Mazarin with so much ability and success, that it was effected entirely by the treaties of Westphalia and by the Pyrenean treaty; that is, at the end of the second of those periods I have presumed to propose to your lordship.

When the third, in which we now are, will end, and what circumstances will mark the end of it, I know not; but this I know, that the great events and revolutions, which have happened in the course of it, interest us still more nearly than those of the two precedent periods. I intended to have drawn up an elenchus or summary of the three, but I doubted on further reflection, whether my memory would enable me to do it with exactness enough; and I saw that if I was able to do it, the deduction would be immeasurably long. Something of this kind however, it may be reasonable to attempt, in speaking of the last period; which may hereafter occasion a further trouble to your lordship.

But to give you some breathing time, I will postpone it at present.

LETTER VII.

A sketch of the state and history of Europe from the Pyrenean treaty in 1659 to the year 1688.

THE first observation I shall make on this third period of modern history is, that as the ambition of Charles V., who united the whole formidable power of Austria in himself, and the restless temper, the cruelty and bigotry of Philip II., were principally objects of the attention and solicitude of the councils of Europe, in the first of these periods; and as the ambition of Ferdinand II. and III., who aimed at nothing less than extirpating the Protestant interest, and under that pretence subduing the liberties of Germany, were objects of the same kind in the second; so an opposition to the growing power of France,

or to speak more properly to the exorbitant ambition of the house of Bourbon, has been the principal affair of Europe, during the greatest part of the present period. The design of aspiring to universal monarchy was imputed to Charles V., as soon as he began to give proofs of his ambition and capacity. The same design was imputed to Lewis XIV. as soon as he began to feel his own strength, and the weakness of his neighbours. Neither of these princes was induced, I believe, by the flattery of his courtiers, or the apprehensions of his adversaries, to entertain so chimerical a design as this would have been, even in that false sense wherein the word universal is so often understood ; and I mistake very much if either of them was of a character, or in circumstances, to undertake it. Both of them had strong desires to raise their families higher, and to extend their dominions farther ; but neither of them had that bold and adventurous ambition which makes a conqueror and a hero. These apprehensions however were given wisely, and taken usefully. They cannot be given nor taken too soon when such powers as these arise ; because when such powers as these are besieged as it were early, by the common policy and watchfulness of their neighbours, each of them may in his turn of strength sally forth, and gain a little ground ; but none of them will be able to push their conquests far, and much less to consummate the entire projects of their ambition. Besides the occasional opposition that was given to Charles V. by our Henry VIII., according to the different moods of humour he was in ; by the popes, according to the several turns of their private interest ; and by the princes of Germany, according to the occasions or pretences that religion or civil liberty furnished ; he had from his first setting out a rival and an enemy in Francis I., who did not maintain his cause in *forma pauperis*, if I may use such an expression ; as we have seen the house of Austria sue, in our days, for dominion at the gate of every palace in Europe. Francis I. was the principal in his own quarrels, paid his own armies, fought his own battles ; and though his valour alone did not hinder Charles V. from subduing all Europe, as Bayle, a better philologer than politician, somewhere asserts, but a multitude of other circumstances easily to be traced in history ; yet he contributed by his victories, and even by his defeats, to waste the strength and check the course of that growing power. Lewis XIV. had no rival of this kind in the house of Austria, nor indeed any enemy of this importance to combat, till the Prince of Orange became King of Great Britain ; and he had great advantages in many other respects, which it is necessary to consider in order to make a true judgment on the affairs of Europe from the year 1660. You will discover the first of these advantages, and such as were productive of all the rest, in the conduct of Richelieu and of Mazarin. Richelieu formed the great design, and laid the foundations ; Mazarin pursued the design, and raised the

superstructure. If I do not deceive myself extremely, there are few passages in history that deserve your lordship's attention more than the conduct that the first and greatest of these ministers held, in laying the foundations I speak of. You will observe how he helped to embroil affairs on every side, and to keep the house of Austria at bay as it were ; how he entered into the quarrels of Italy against Spain, into that concerning the Valteline, and that concerning the succession of Mantua ; without engaging so deep as to divert him from another great object of his policy, subduing Rochelle and disarming the Huguenots. You will observe how he turned himself, after this was done, to stop the progress of Ferdinand in Germany. Whilst Spain fomented discontents at the court and disorders in the kingdom of France, by all possible means, even by taking engagements with the Duke of Rohan, and for supporting the Protestants, Richelieu abetted the same interest in Germany against Ferdinand and in the Low Countries against Spain. The emperor was become almost the master in Germany. Christian IV., king of Denmark, had been at the head of a league, wherein the United Provinces, Sweden, and Lower Saxony entered to oppose his progress ; but Christian had been defeated by Tilly and Valstein, and obliged to conclude a treaty at Lubeck, where Ferdinand gave him the law. It was then that Gustavus Adolphus, with whom Richelieu made an alliance, entered into this war and soon turned the fortune of it. The French minister had not yet engaged his master openly in the war ; but when the Dutch grew impatient and threatened to renew their truce with Spain, unless France declared ; when the King of Sweden was killed, and the battle of Nordlingen lost ; when Saxony had turned again to the side of the emperor, and Brandenburg and so many others had followed this example, that Hesse almost alone persisted in the Swedish alliance ; then Richelieu engaged his master, and profited of every circumstance which the conjuncture afforded, to engage him with advantage. For first he had a double advantage by engaging so late ; that of coming fresh into the quarrel against a wearied and almost exhausted enemy ; and that of yielding to the impatience of his friends, who pressed by their necessities and by the want they had of France, gave this minister an opportunity of laying those claims and establishing those pretensions, in all his treaties with Holland, Sweden, and the princes and states of the empire, on which he had projected the future aggrandizement of France. The manner in which he engaged, and the air that he gave to his engagement, were advantages of the second sort, advantages of reputation and credit ; yet were these of no small moment in the course of the war, and operated strongly in favour of France as he designed they should, even after his death, and at and after the treaties of Westphalia. He varnished ambition with the most plausible and popular pretences. The Elector of Treves had put

himself under the protection of France ; and, if I remember right, he made this step when the emperor could not protect him against the Swedes, whom he had reason to apprehend. No matter, the governor of Luxemburg was ordered to surprise Treves and to seize the elector. He executed his orders with success, and carried this prince prisoner into Brabant. Richelieu seized the lucky circumstance ; he reclaimed the elector ; and, on the refusal of the cardinal Infant, the war was declared. France, you see, appeared the common friend of liberty, the defender of it in the Low Countries against the King of Spain, and in Germany against the Emperor, as well as the protector of the princes of the empire, many of whose states had been illegally invaded, and whose persons were no longer safe from violence even in their own palaces. All these appearances were kept up in the negotiations at Munster, where Mazarin reaped what Richelieu had sowed. The demands that France made for herself were very great ; but the conjuncture was favourable, and she improved it to the utmost. No figure could be more flattering than hers, at the head of these negotiations ; nor more mortifying than the emperor's through the whole course of the treaty. The princes and states of the empire had been treated as vassals by the emperor ; France determined them to treat with him on this occasion as sovereigns, and supported them in this determination. Whilst Sweden seemed concerned for the protestant interest alone, and showed no other regard as she had no other alliance, France affected to be impartial alike to the protestant and to the papist, and to have no interest at heart but the common interest of the Germanic body. Her demands were excessive, but they were to be satisfied principally out of the emperor's patrimonial dominions. It had been the art of her ministers to establish this general maxim on many particular experiences, that the grandeur of France was a real, and would be a constant, security to the rights and liberties of the empire against the emperor ; and it is no wonder therefore, this maxim prevailing, injuries, resentments and jealousies being fresh on one side, and services, obligations and confidence on the other, that the Germans were not unwilling France should extend her empire on this side of the Rhine, whilst Sweden did the same on this side of the Baltic. These treaties, and the immense credit and influence that France had acquired by them in the empire, put it out of the power of one branch of the house of Austria to return the obligations of assistance to the other, in the war that continued between France and Spain, till the Pyrenean treaty. By this treaty the superiority of the house of Bourbon over the house of Austria was not only completed and confirmed, but the great design of uniting the Spanish and the French monarchies under the former was laid.

The third period therefore begins by a great change of the balance of power in Europe, and by the prospect of one much greater and

more fatal. Before I descend into the particulars I intend to mention, of the course of affairs, and of the political conduct of the great powers of Europe in this third period, give me leave to cast my eyes once more back on the second. The reflection I am going to make seems to me important, and leads to all that is to follow.

The Dutch made their peace separately at Munster with Spain, who acknowledged then the sovereignty and independency of their commonwealth. The French, who had been, after our Elizabeth, their principal support, reproached them severely for this breach of faith. They excused themselves in the best manner, and by the best reasons, they could. All this your lordship will find in the monuments of that time. But I think it not improbable that they had a motive you will not find there, and which it was not proper to give as a reason or excuse to the French. Might not the wise men amongst them consider even then, besides the immediate advantages that accrued by this treaty to their commonwealth, that the imperial power was fallen; that the power of Spain was vastly reduced; that the house of Austria was nothing more than the shadow of a great name, and that the house of Bourbon was advancing, by large strides, to a degree of power as exorbitant and as formidable as that of the other family had been in the hands of Charles V., of Philip II., and lately of the two Ferdinands? Might they not foresee even then what happened in the course of very few years, when they were obliged for their own security to assist their old enemies the Spaniards against their old friends the French? I think they might. Our Charles I. was no great politician, and yet he seemed to discern that the balance of power was turning in favour of France, some years before the treaties of Westphalia. He refused to be neuter, and threatened to take part with Spain, if the French pursued the design of besieging Dunkirk and Gravelines, according to a concert taken between them and the Dutch, and in pursuance of a treaty for dividing the Spanish Low Countries, which Richelieu had negotiated. Cromwell either did not discern this turn of the balance of power, long afterwards when it was much more visible; or, discerning it, he was induced by reasons of private interest to act against the general interest of Europe. Cromwell joined with France against Spain; and though he got Jamaica and Dunkirk, he drove the Spaniards into a necessity of making a peace with France, that has disturbed the peace of the world almost fourscore years, and the consequences of which have well-nigh beggared in our times the nation he enslaved in his. There is a tradition, I have heard it from persons who lived in those days, and I believe it came from Thurloe, that Cromwell was in treaty with Spain, and ready to turn his arms against France when he died. If this fact was certain, as little as I honour his memory, I should have some regret that he died so soon. But whatever his intentions were, we must charge the Pyrenean treaty, and the fatal con-

sequences of it, in great measure to his account. The Spaniards abhorred the thought of marrying their infanta to Lewis XIV. It was on this point that they broke the negotiation Lionne had begun ; and you will perceive, that if they resumed it afterwards, and offered the marriage they had before rejected, Cromwell's league with France was a principal inducement to this alteration of their resolution.

The precise point at which the scales of power turn, like that of the solstice in either tropic, is imperceptible to common observation ; and, in one case as in the other, some progress must be made in the new direction before the change is perceived. They who are in the sinking scale,—for in the political balance of power, unlike to all others, the scale that is empty sinks, and that which is full rises,—they who are in the sinking scale do not easily come off from the habitual prejudices of superior wealth or power, or skill or courage, nor from the confidence that these prejudices inspire. They who are in the rising scale do not immediately feel their strength, nor assume that confidence in it which successful experience gives them afterwards. They who are the most concerned to watch the variations of this balance misjudge often in the same manner, and from the same prejudices. They continue to dread a power no longer able to hurt them, or they continue to have no apprehensions of a power that grows daily more formidable. Spain verified the first observation at the end of the second period, when proud and poor, and enterprising and feeble, she still thought herself a match for France. France verified the second observation at the beginning of the third period, when the triple alliance stopped the progress of her arms, which alliances much more considerable were not able to effect afterwards. The other principal powers of Europe, in their turns, have verified the third observation in both its parts, through the whole course of this period.

When Lewis XIV. took the administration of affairs into his own hands, about the year 1660, he was in the prime of his age, and had what princes seldom have, the advantages of youth and those of experience together. Their education is generally bad ; for which reason royal birth, that gives a right to the throne among other people, gave an absolute exclusion from it among the Mamelukes. His was in all respects, except one, as bad as that of other princes. He jested sometimes on his own ignorance, and there were other defects in his character owing to his education, which he did not see. But Mazarin had initiated him betimes in the mysteries of his policy. He had seen a great part of those foundations laid, on which he was to raise the fabric of his future grandeur ; and as Mazarin finished the work that Richelieu began, he had the lessons of one, and the examples of both, to instruct him. He had acquired habits of secrecy and method in business ; of reserve, discretion, decency, and dignity, in behaviour. *If he was not the greatest king, he was the best actor of majesty at least that ever filled a throne.*

He by no means wanted that courage which is commonly called bravery, though the want of it was imputed to him in the midst of his greatest triumphs ; nor that other courage, less ostentatious and more rarely found, calm, steady, persevering resolution, which seems to arise less from the temper of the body, and is therefore called courage of the mind. He had them both most certainly, and I could produce unquestionable anecdotes in proof. He was, in one word, much superior to any prince with whom he had to do, when he began to govern. He was surrounded with great captains bred in former wars, and with great ministers bred in the same school as himself. They who had worked under Mazarin worked on the same plan under him ; and as they had the advantages of genius and experience over most of the ministers of other countries, so they had another advantage over those who were equal or superior to them : the advantage of serving a master whose absolute power was established ; and the advantage of a situation wherein they might exert their whole capacity without contradiction ; over that, for instance, wherein your lordship's great grandfather was placed, at the same time in England, and John de Witt in Holland. Among these ministers, Colbert must be mentioned particularly upon this occasion ; because it was he who improved the wealth, and consequently the power of France extremely, by the order he put into the finances, and by the encouragement he gave to trade and manufactures. The soil, the climate, the situation of France, the ingenuity, the industry, the vivacity of her inhabitants are such ; she has so little want of the product of other countries, and other countries have so many real or imaginary wants to be supplied by her ; that when she is not at war with all her neighbours, when her domestic quiet is preserved and any tolerable administration of government prevails, she must grow rich at the expense of those who trade, and even of those who do not open a trade, with her. Her baubles, her modes, the follies and extravagancies of her luxury, cost England, about the time we are speaking of, little less than £800,000 a year, and other nations in their proportions. Colbert made the most of all these advantageous circumstances, and whilst he filled the national sponge he taught his successors how to squeeze it : a secret that he repented having discovered, they say, when he saw the immense sums that were necessary to supply the growing magnificence of his master.

This was the character of Lewis XIV., and this was the state of his kingdom at the beginning of the present period. If his power was great, his pretensions were still greater. He had renounced, and the infanta with his consent had renounced, all right to the succession of Spain, in the strongest terms that the precaution of the councils of Madrid could contrive. No matter ; he consented to these renunciations, but your lordship will find by the letters of Mazarin and by other memorials, that he acted on the contrary principle, from the first, which

he avowed soon afterwards. Such a power and such pretensions should have given, one would think, an immediate alarm to the rest of Europe. Philip IV. was broken and decayed, like the monarchy he governed. One of his sons died, as I remember, during the negotiations that preceded the year 1660; and the survivor, who was Charles II., rather languished than lived from the cradle to the grave. So dangerous a contingency, therefore, as the union of the two monarchies of France and Spain being in view forty years together, one would imagine that the principal powers of Europe had the means of preventing it constantly in view during the same time. But it was otherwise. France acted very systematically from 1660, to the death of King Charles II. of Spain. She never lost sight of her great object, the succession to the whole Spanish monarchy; and she accepted the will of the King of Spain in favour of the Duke of Anjou. As she never lost sight of her great object during this time, so she lost no opportunity of increasing her power, while she waited for that of succeeding in her pretensions. The two branches of Austria were in no condition of making a considerable opposition to her designs and attempts. Holland, who of all other powers was the most concerned to oppose them, was at that time under two influences that hindered her from pursuing her true interest. Her true interest was to have used her utmost endeavours to unite closely and intimately with England on the restoration of King Charles. She did the very contrary. John de Witt, at the head of the Louvestein faction, governed. The interest of his party was to keep the house of Orange down; he courted therefore the friendship of France, and neglected that of England. The alliance between our nation and the Dutch was renewed, I think, in 1662; but the latter had made a defensive league with France a little before, on the supposition principally of a war with England. The war became inevitable very soon. Cromwell had chastised them for their usurpations in trade and the outrages and cruelties they had committed; but he had not cured them. The same spirit continued in the Dutch, the same resentments in the English; and the pique of merchants became the pique of nations. France entered into the war on the side of Holland; but the little assistance she gave the Dutch showed plain enough that her intention was to make these two powers waste their strength against one another, whilst she extended her conquests in the Spanish Low Countries. Her invasion of these provinces obliged De Witt to change his conduct. Hitherto he had been attached to France in the closest manner, had led his republic to serve all the purposes of France, and had renewed with the Marshal D'Estrades a project of dividing the Spanish Netherlands between France and Holland, that had been taken up formerly, when Richelieu made use of it to flatter their ambition, and to engage them to prolong the war against Spain. A project not unlike to that which was held out to them by the famous

preliminaries, and the extravagant barrier treaty, in 1709; and which engaged them to continue a war on the principle of ambition, into which they had entered with reasonable and more moderate views.

As the private interests of the two De Witts hindered that commonwealth from being on her guard, as early as she ought to have been, against France; so the mistaken policy of the court of England, and the short views, and the profuse temper of the prince who governed, gave great advantages to Lewis XIV. in the pursuit of his designs. He bought Dunkirk; and your lordship knows how great a clamour was raised on that occasion against your noble ancestor: as if he alone had been answerable for the measure, and his interest had been concerned in it. I have heard our late friend Mr. Geo. Clarke quote a witness, who was quite unexceptionable, but I cannot recall his name at present, who many years after all these transactions, and the death of my lord Clarendon, affirmed, that the Earl of Sandwich had owned to him that he himself gave his opinion among many others, officers, and ministers, for selling Dunkirk. Their reasons could not be good, I presume to say; but several that might be plausible at that time are easily guessed. A prince, like King Charles, who would have made as many bad bargains as any young spendthrift for money, finding himself thus backed, we may assure ourselves was peremptorily determined to sell: and whatever your great grandfather's opinion was, this I am able to pronounce upon my own experience, that his treaty for the sale is no proof he was of opinion to sell. When the resolution of selling was once taken, to whom could the sale be made? to the Dutch? No. This measure would have been at least as impolitic, and in that moment perhaps more odious than the other. To the Spaniards? They were unable to buy: and as low as their power was sunk, the principle of opposing it still prevailed. I have sometimes thought that the Spaniards, who were forced to make peace with Portugal and to renounce all claim to that crown, four or five years afterwards, might have been induced to take this resolution then, if the regaining Dunkirk without any expense had been a condition proposed to them: and that the Portuguese, who notwithstanding their alliance with England and the indirect succours that France afforded them, were little able, after the treaty especially, to support a war against Spain, might have been induced to pay the price of Dunkirk, for so great an advantage as immediate peace with Spain, and the extinction of all foreign pretences on their crown. But this speculation, concerning events so long ago passed, is not much to the purpose here. I proceed therefore to observe that notwithstanding the sale of Dunkirk, and the secret leanings of our court to that of France, yet England was first to take the alarm, when Lewis XIV. invaded the Spanish Netherlands in 1667; and the triple alliance was the work of an English minister. It was time to take this alarm; for from the

moment that the King of France claimed a right to the county of Burgundy, the duchy of Brabant, and other portions of the Low Countries, as devolved on his queen by the death of her father Philip IV., he pulled off the mask entirely. Volumes were writ to establish, and to refute, this supposed right. Your lordship no doubt will look into a controversy that has employed so many pens and so many swords; and I believe you will think it was sufficiently bold in the French, to argue from customs, that regulated the course of private successions in certain provinces, to a right of succeeding to the sovereignty of those provinces; and to assert the divisibility of the Spanish monarchy, with the same breath with which they asserted the indivisibility of their own; although the proofs in one case were just as good as the proofs in the other, and the fundamental law of indivisibility was at least as good a law in Spain, as either this or the salique law was in France. But however proper it might be for the French and Austrian pens to enter into long discussions, and to appeal on this great occasion to the rest of Europe, the rest of Europe had a short objection to make to the plea of France, which no sophisms, no quirks of law, could evade. Spain accepted the renunciations as a real security: France gave them as such to Spain, and in effect to the rest of Europe. If they had not been thus given and thus taken, the Spaniards would not have married their infanta to the King of France, whatever distress they might have endured by the prolongation of the war. These renunciations were renunciations of all rights whatsoever to the whole Spanish monarchy, and to every part of it. The provinces claimed by France at this time were parts of it. To claim them was therefore to claim the whole; for if the renunciations were no bar to the rights accruing to Maria Theresa on the death of her father Philip IV., neither could they be any to the rights that would accrue to her and her children, on the death of her brother Charles II., an unhealthful youth, and who at this instant was in immediate danger of dying; for to all the complicated distempers he brought into the world with him, the small-pox was added. Your lordship sees how the fatal contingency of uniting the two monarchies of France and Spain stared mankind in the face; and yet nothing that I can remember was done to prevent it: not so much as a guaranty given, or a declaration made, to assert the validity of these renunciations, and for securing the effect of them. The triple alliance indeed stopped the progress of the French arms, and produced the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. But England, Sweden, and Holland, the contracting powers in this alliance, seemed to look, and probably did look, no farther. France kept a great and important part of what she had surprised, or ravished, or purchased; for we cannot say with any propriety that she conquered; and the Spaniards were obliged to set all they saved to the account of gain. The German branch of Austria had been reduced very low in power.

and in credit under Ferdinand III., by the treaties of Westphalia, as I have said already. Lewis XIV. maintained during many years the influence these treaties had given him among the princes and states of the empire. The famous capitulation made at Frankfort on the election of Leopold, who succeeded Ferdinand about the year 1657, was encouraged by the intrigues of France; and the power of France was looked upon as the sole power that could ratify and secure effectually the observation of the conditions then made. The league of the Rhine was not renewed I believe after the year 1666; but though this league was not renewed, yet some of these princes and states continued in their old engagements with France: whilst others took new engagements on particular occasions, according as private and sometimes very paltry interests, and the emissaries of France in all their little courts, disposed them. In short, the princes of Germany showed no alarm at the growing ambition and power of Lewis XIV., but contributed to encourage one, and to confirm the other. In such a state of things the German branch was little able to assist the Spanish branch against France, either in the war that ended by the Pyrenean treaty, or in that we are speaking of here, the short war that began in 1667, and was ended by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, in 1668. But it was not this alone that disabled the emperor from acting with vigour in the cause of his family then, nor that has rendered the house of Austria a dead weight upon all her allies ever since. Bigotry, and its inseparable companion, cruelty, as well as the tyranny and avarice of the court of Vienna, created in those days, and has maintained in ours, almost a perpetual diversion of the imperial arms from all effectual opposition to France. I mean to speak of the troubles in Hungary. Whatever they became in their progress, they were caused originally by the usurpations and persecutions of the emperor; and when the Hungarians were called rebels first, they were called so for no other reason than this, that they would not be slaves. The dominion of the emperor being less supportable than that of the Turks, this unhappy people opened a door to the latter to infest the empire, instead of making their country, what it had been before, a barrier against the Ottoman power. France became a sure though secret ally of the Turks, as well as the Hungarians, and has found her account in it, by keeping the emperor in perpetual alarms on that side, while she has ravaged the empire and the Low Countries on the other. Thus we saw, thirty-two years ago, the arms of France and Bavaria in possession of Passau, and the malcontents of Hungary in the suburbs of Vienna. In a word, when Lewis XIV. made the first essay of his power, by the war of 1667, and sounded as it were the councils of Europe concerning his pretensions on the Spanish succession, he found his power to be great beyond what his neighbours or even he perhaps thought it: great by the wealth, and greater by the united spirit of his

people; greater still by the ill policy and divided interests that governed those who had a superior common interest to oppose him. He found that the members of the triple alliance did not see, or seeing did not think proper to own that they saw, the injustice, and the consequence of his pretensions. They contented themselves to give to Spain an act of guaranty for securing the execution of the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. He knew even then how ill the guaranty would be observed by two of them at least, by England and by Sweden. The treaty itself was nothing more than a composition between the bully and the bullied. Tournay, and Lisle, and Douay, and other places that I have forgot, were yielded to him; and he restored the county of Burgundy, according to the option that Spain made, against the interest and the expectation too of the Dutch, when an option was forced upon her. The King of Spain compounded for his possession; but the emperor compounded at the same time for his succession, by a private eventual treaty of partition, which the commander of Gremonville, and the Count of Auersberg signed at Vienna. The same Leopold who exclaimed so loudly in 1658 against any partition of the Spanish monarchy, and refused to submit to that which England and Holland had then made, made one himself in 1668, with so little regard to these powers, that the ten provinces were thrown into the lot of France.

There is no room to wonder if such experience as Lewis XIV. had upon this occasion, and such a face of affairs in Europe, raising his hopes, raised his ambition; and if, in making peace at Aix la Chapelle, he meditated a new war, the war of 1672, the preparations he made for it by negotiations in all parts, by alliances wherever he found ingressions, and by the increase of his forces, were equally proofs of ability, industry, and power. I shall not descend into these particulars: your lordship will find them pretty well detailed in the memorials of that time. But one of the alliances he made I must mention, though I mention it with the utmost regret and indignation. England was fatally engaged to act a part in this conspiracy against the peace and the liberty of Europe; nay, against her own peace and her own liberty; for a bubble's part it was equally wicked and impolitic. Forgive the terms I use, my lord: none can be too strong. The principles of the triple alliance, just and wise, and worthy of a king of England, were laid aside. Then the progress of the French arms was to be checked, the ten provinces were to be saved, and by saving them the barrier of Holland was to be preserved. Now we joined our councils and our arms to those of France, in a project that could not be carried on at all, as it was easy to foresee and as the events showed, unless it was carried on against Spain, the emperor, and most of the princes of Germany, as well as of the Dutch; and which could not be carried on successfully without leaving the ten provinces entirely at the mercy of France, and giving her pretence and opportunity of ravaging the

empire, and extending her conquests on the Rhine. The house of Van Beuningen and other pretenders that I have ever seen advanced, the states of the Low Countries, were ridiculous. Their respects to no one; and the true object of Lewis X. was, that his son Charles II. should know what could a king of England mean? Charles II. had reason of resentment against the Dutch, and just one reason. God's curse on the rest, it was not easy for him to forget the affront he had received, and the loss he had sustained when, depending on the peace that was ready to be signed, and that was signed at Breda, it fell to him to go to sea to fit out his fleet; and when that of Holland, commanded by Keyser, with Cornelius de Witt on board, as deputy or commissary of the states, burnt his ships at Chatham in June. The famous papal edict, as it was called but did not prove, in the event, to be the creation of a state-holder, which John De Witt promoted, certainly made obliged the Prince of Orange to swear to maintain a very large force after the conclusion of the peace at Breda, might be another motive in the breast of King Charles II., as it was certainly a pleasure of revenge on the Dutch, or at least on the De Wits and the Jacobite faction that ruled almost despotically in that commonwealth. But it is plain that neither these reasons, nor others of a more ancient date, determined him to this alliance with France, since he contracted the triple alliance within four or five months after the two events I have mentioned happened. What then did he mean? Did he mean to acquire one of the seven provinces, and divide them, as the Dutch had twice treated for the division of the ten with France? I believe not; but this I believe, that his inclinations were favourable to the papish interests in general, and that he meant to make himself more absolute at home; that he thought it necessary to this end to humiliate the Dutch, to reduce their power, and perhaps to change the form of their government; to deprive his subjects of the correspondence with a neighbouring protestant and free state, and of all hope of success and support from thence in their opposition to him; in a word, to avert the designs of France on the continent, that France might avert his designs on his own kingdom. This, I say, I believe, and this I should venture to affirm; if I had in my hands to produce, and was at liberty to quote, the private relations I have read formerly, drawn up by those who were no enemies to such designs, and on the authority of those who were parties to them. But whatever King Charles II. meant, certain it is that his conduct established the superiority of France in Europe.

But this charge, however, must not be confined to him alone. Those who were nearer the danger, those who were exposed to the immediate attacks of France, and even those who were her rivals for the same succession, having either assisted her or engaged to remain neutrals. A strange fatality prevailed, and produced such a conjuncture as can

hardly be paralleled in history. Your lordship will observe with astonishment, even in the beginning of the year 1672, all the neighbours of France acting as if they had nothing to fear from her, and some as if they had much to hope, by helping her to oppress the Dutch and sharing with her the spoils of that commonwealth. Delenda est Carthago, was the cry in England, and seemed, too, a maxim on the continent.

In the course of the same year, you will observe that all these powers took the alarm, and began to unite in opposition to France. Even England thought it time to interpose in favour of the Dutch. The consequences of this alarm, of this sudden turn in the policy of Europe, and of that which happened by the massacre of the De Witts, and the elevation of the Prince of Orange in the government of the seven provinces, saved these provinces, and stopped the rapid progress of the arms of France. Lewis XIV. indeed surprised the seven provinces in this war, as he had surprised the ten in that of 1667, and ravaged defenceless countries with armies sufficient to conquer them, if they had been prepared to resist. In the war of 1672, he had little less than 150,000 men on foot, besides the bodies of English, Swiss, Italians, and Swedes, that amounted to 30,000 or 40,000 more. With this mighty force he took forty places in forty days, imposed extravagant conditions of peace, played the monarch a little while at Utrecht; and as soon as the Dutch recovered from their consternation, and, animated by the example of the Prince of Orange and the hopes of succour, refused these conditions, he went back to Versailles, and left his generals to carry on his enterprise: which they did with so little success, that Grave and Maestricht alone remained to him of all the boasted conquests he had made; and even these he offered two years afterwards to restore, if by that concession he could have prevailed on the Dutch at that time to make peace with him. But they were not yet disposed to abandon their allies; for allies now they had. The emperor and the king of Spain had engaged in the quarrel against France, and many of the princes of the empire had done the same. Not all. The Bavarian continued obstinate in his neutrality, and, to mention no more, the Swedes made a great diversion in favour of France in the empire; where the Duke of Hanover abetted their designs as much as he could, for he was a zealous partisan of France, though the other princes of his house acted for the common cause. I descend into no more particulars. The war that Lewis XIV. kindled by attacking in so violent a manner the Dutch commonwealth, and by making so arbitrary an use of his first success, became general, in the Low Countries, in Spain, in Sicily, on the upper and lower Rhine, in Denmark, in Sweden, and in the provinces of Germany belonging to these two crowns, on the Mediterranean, the Ocean, and the Baltic. France supported this war with advantage on every side: and when

your lordship considers in what manner it was carried on against her, you will not be surprised that she did so. Spain had spirit, but too little strength to maintain her power in Sicily, where Messina had revolted; to defend her frontier on that side of the Pyrenees, and to resist the great efforts of the French in the Low Countries. The empire was divided; and, even among the princes who acted against France, there was neither union in their councils, nor concert in their projects, nor order in preparations, nor vigour in execution: and, to say the truth, there was not, in the whole confederacy, a man whose abilities could make him a match for the Prince of Condé or the Marshal of Turenne; nor many who were in any degree equal to Luxemburg, Crequi, Schomberg, and other generals of inferior note, who commanded the armies of France. The emperor took this very time to make new invasions on the liberties of Hungary, and to oppress his Protestant subjects. The Prince of Orange alone acted with invincible firmness, like a patriot, and a hero. Neither the seductions of France nor those of England, neither the temptations of ambition nor those of private interest, could make him swerve from the true interest of his country, nor from the common interest of Europe. He had raised more sieges, and lost more battles, it was said, than any general of his age had done. Be it so. But his defeats were manifestly due in great measure to circumstances independent on him; and that spirit, which even these defeats could not depress, was all his own. He had difficulties in his own commonwealth; the governors of the Spanish Low Countries crossed his measures sometimes; the German allies disappointed and broke them often; and it is not improbable that he was frequently betrayed. He was so perhaps even by Souches, the imperial general; a Frenchman according to Bayle, and a pensioner of Louvois according to common report and very strong appearances. He had not yet credit and authority sufficient to make him a centre of union to a whole confederacy, the soul that animated and directed so great a body. He came to be such afterwards; but at the time spoken of he could not take so great a part upon him. No other prince or general was equal to it; and the consequences of this defect appeared almost in every operation. France was surrounded by a multitude of enemies, all intent to demolish her power. But, like the builders of Babel, they spoke different languages; and as those could not build, these could not demolish, for want of understanding one another. France improved this advantage by her arms, and more by her negotiations. Nimeghen was, after Cologne, the scene of these. England was the mediating power, and I know not whether our Charles II. did not serve her purposes more usefully in the latter, and under the character of mediator, than he did or could have done by joining his arms to hers, and acting as her ally. The Dutch were induced to sign a treaty with him.

that broke the confederacy, and gave great advantage to France ; for the purport of it was to oblige France and Spain to make peace on a plan to be proposed to them, and no mention was made in it of the other allies that I remember. The Dutch were glad to get out of an expensive war. France promised to restore Maestricht to them, and Maestricht was the only place that remained unrecovered of all they had lost. They dropped Spain at Nimeghen as they had dropped France at Munster ; but many circumstances concurred to give a much worse grace to their abandoning of Spain, than to their abandoning of France. I need not specify them ; this only I would observe : When they made a separate peace at Munster, they left an ally who was in condition to carry on the war alone with advantage, and they presumed to impose no terms upon him ; when they made a separate peace at Nimeghen, they abandoned an ally who was in no condition to carry on the war alone, and who was reduced to accept whatever terms the common enemy prescribed. In their great distress in 1673, they engaged to restore Maestricht to the Spaniards as soon as it should be retaken ; it was not retaken, and they accepted it for themselves as the price of the separate peace they made with France. The Dutch had engaged farther, to make neither peace nor truce with the King of France, till that prince consented to restore to Spain all he had conquered since the Pyrenean treaty. But far from keeping this promise in any tolerable degree, Lewis XIV. acquired by the plan imposed on Spain at Nimeghen, besides the county of Burgundy, so many other countries and towns on the side of the ten Spanish provinces, that these, added to the places he kept of those which had been yielded to him by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle (for some of little consequence he restored) put into his hands the principal strength of that barrier, against which we goaded ourselves almost to death in the last great war ; and made good the saying of the Marshal of Schomberg, that to attack this barrier was to take the beast by his horns. I know very well what may be said to excuse the Dutch. The emperor was more intent to tyrannize his subjects on one side than to defend them on the other. He attempted little against France, and the little he did attempt was ill ordered and worse executed. The assistance of the princes of Germany was often uncertain, and always expensive. Spain was already indebted to Holland for great sums ; greater still must be advanced to her if the war continued ; and experience showed that France was able, and would continue, to prevail against her present enemies. The triple league had stopped her progress and obliged her to abandon the county of Burgundy ; but Sweden was now engaged in the war on the side of France, as England had been in the beginning of it ; and England was now privately favourable to her interests, as Sweden had been in the beginning of it. The whole ten provinces would have been subdued in the course

of a few campaigns more ; and it was better for Spain and the Dutch too, that part should be saved by accepting a sort of composition, than the whole be risked by refusing it. This might be alleged to excuse the conduct of the States General, in imposing hard terms on Spain, in making none for their other allies, and in signing alone ; by which steps they gave France an opportunity that she improved with great dexterity of management, the opportunity of treating with the confederates one by one, and of beating them by detail in the cabinet, if I may so say, as she had often done in the field. I shall not compare these reasons, which were but too well founded in fact, and must appear plausible at least, with other considerations that might be, and were at the time, insisted upon. I confine myself to a few observations, which every knowing and impartial man must admit. Your lordship will observe first that the fatal principle of compounding with Louis XIV., from the time that his pretensions, his power, and the use he made of it, began to threaten Europe, prevailed still more at Nimeghen than it had prevailed at Aix ; so that although he did not obtain to the full all he attempted, yet the dominions of France were by common consent, on every treaty, more and more extended ; her barriers on all sides were more and more strengthened ; those of her neighbours were more and more weakened ; and that power, which was to assert one day against the rest of Europe the pretended rights of the house of Bourbon to the Spanish monarchy, was more and more established, and rendered truly formidable in such hands at least, during the course of the first eighteen years of the period. Your lordship will please to observe, in the second place, that the extreme weakness of one branch of Austria, and the miserable conduct of both ; the poverty of some of the princes of the empire, and the disunion, and, to speak plainly, the mercenary policy of all of them ; in short, the confined views, the false notions, and, to speak as plainly of my own as of other nations, the iniquity of the councils of England, not only hindered the growth of this power from being stopped in time, but nursed it up into strength almost insuperable by any future confederacy. A third observation is this. If the excuses made for the conduct of the Dutch at Nimeghen are not sufficient, they too must come in for their share in this condemnation even after the death of the De Witts ; as they were to be condemned most justly, during that administration, for abetting and favouring France. If these excuses, grounded on their inability to pursue any longer a war, the principal profit of which was to accrue to their confederates, for that was the case after the year 1673, or 1674, and the principal burden of which was thrown on them by their confederates ; if these are sufficient, they should not have acted, for decency's sake as well as out of good policy, the part they did act in 1711 and 1712, towards the late queen, who had complaints of the same kind, in a much higher degree and

with circumstances much more aggravating, to make of them, of the emperor, and of all the princes of Germany ; and who was far from treating them and their other allies at that time, as they treated Spain and their other allies in 1678. Immediately after the Dutch had made their peace, that of Spain was signed with France. The emperor's treaty with this crown and that of Sweden was concluded in the following year ; and Lewis XIV. being now at liberty to assist his ally, whilst he had tied up the powers with whom he had treated from assisting theirs, he soon forced the King of Denmark and the Elector of Brandenburgh to restore all they had taken from the Swedes, and to conclude the peace of the north. In all these treaties he gave the law, and he was now at the highest point of his grandeur. He continued at this point for several years, and in this height of his power he prepared those alliances against it, under the weight of which he was at last well-nigh oppressed ; and might have been reduced as low as the general interest of Europe required, if some of the causes which worked now had not continued to work in his favour, and if his enemies had not proved, in their turn of fortune, as insatiable as prosperity had rendered him.

After he had made peace with all the powers with whom he had been at war, he continued to vex both Spain and the empire, and to extend his conquests in the Low-countries and on the Rhine, both by the pen and the sword. He erected the chambers of Metz and of Brisach, where his own subjects were prosecutors, witnesses, and judges all at once. Upon the decisions of these tribunals, he seized into his own hands, under the notion of dependencies and the pretence of reunions, whatever towns or districts of country tempted his ambition or suited his conveniency ; and added by these and by other means, in the midst of peace, more territories to those the late treaties had yielded to him than he could have got by continuing the war. He acted afterwards in the support of all this, without any bounds or limits. His glory was a reason for attacking Holland in 1672, and his conveniency a reason for many of the attacks he made on others afterwards. He took Luxemburg by force, he stole Strasburg, he bought Casal, and whilst he waited the opportunity of acquiring to his family the crown of Spain, he was not without thoughts nor hopes perhaps of bringing into it the imperial crown likewise. Some of the cruelties he exercised in the empire may be ascribed to his disappointment in this view : I say some of them, because in the war that ended by the treaty of Nimeghen he had already exercised many. Though the French writers endeavour to slide over them, to palliate them, and to impute them particularly to the English that were in their service (for even this one of their writers has the front to advance), yet these cruelties, unheard of among civilized nations, must be granted to have been ordered by the councils, and executed by the arms of France, in the Palatinate, and in other parts.

If Lewis XIV. could have contented himself with the acquisitions that were confirmed to him by the treaties of 1678 and 1679, and with the authority and reputation which he then gained, it is plain that he would have prevented the alliances that were afterwards formed against him, and that he might have regained his credit amongst the princes of the empire, where he had one family alliance by the marriage of his brother to the daughter of the Elector Palatine, and another by that of his son to the sister of the Elector of Bavaria, where Sweden was closely attached to him, and where the same principles of private interest would have soon attached others as closely. He might have remained not only the principal, but the directing power of Europe, and have held this rank with all the glory imaginable till the death of the King of Spain, or some other object of great ambition, had determined him to act another part. But instead of this, he continued to vex and provoke all those who were, unhappily for them, his neighbours, and that in many instances for trifles. An example of this kind occurs to me. On the death of the Duke of Deux Ponts, he seized that little inconsiderable duchy, without any regard to the indisputable right of the kings of Sweden, to the services that crown had rendered him, or to the want he might have of that alliance hereafter. The consequence was, that Sweden entered with the emperor, the King of Spain, the Elector of Bavaria, and the States General, into the alliance of guaranty, as it was called, about the year 1683, and into the famous league of Augsburg, in 1686.

Since I have mentioned this league, and since we may date from it a more general and more concerted opposition to France than there had been before, give me leave to recall some of the reflections that have presented themselves to my mind, in considering what I have read, and what I have heard related, concerning the passages of that time. They will be of use to form our judgment concerning later passages. If the King of France became an object of aversion on account of any invasions he made, any deviations from public faith, any barbarities exercised where his arms prevailed, or the persecution of his protestant subjects, the emperor deserved to be such an object, at least as much as he, on the same accounts. The emperor was so too, but with this difference relatively to the political system of the west. The Austrian ambition and bigotry exerted themselves in distant countries, whose interests were not considered as a part of this system ; for otherwise there would have been as much reason for assisting the people of Hungary and of Transylvania against the emperor, as there had been formerly for assisting the people of the seven united provinces against Spain, or as there had been lately for assisting them against France ; but the ambition and bigotry of Lewis XIV. were exerted in the Low Countries, on the Rhine, in Italy, and in Spain, in the very midst of this system, if I may say so, and with success that could not fail to subvert

it in time. The power of the house of Austria, that had been feared too long, was feared no longer ; and that of the house of Bourbon, by having been feared too late, was now grown terrible. The emperor was so intent on the establishment of his absolute power in Hungary, that he exposed the empire doubly to desolation and ruin for the sake of it. He left the frontier almost quite defenceless on the side of the Rhine, against the inroads and ravages of France, and by showing no mercy to the Hungarians nor keeping any faith with them, he forced that miserable people into alliances with the Turk, who invaded the empire and besieged Vienna. Even this event had no effect upon them. Your lordship will find that Sobieski, king of Poland, who had forced the Turks to raise the siege, and had fixed the imperial crown that tottered on his head, could not prevail on him to take those measures by which alone it was possible to cover the empire, to secure the King of Spain, and to reduce that power who was probably one day to dispute with him this prince's succession. Tekeli and the malcontents made such demands as none but a tyrant could refuse—the preservation of their ancient privileges, liberty of conscience, the convocation of a free diet or parliament, and others of less importance. All was in vain. The war continued with them and with the Turks, and France was left at liberty to push her enterprises almost without opposition against Germany and the Low Countries. The distress in both was so great that the States General saw no other expedient for stopping the progress of the French arms than a cessation of hostilities, or a truce of twenty years, which they negotiated, and which was accepted by the emperor and the King of Spain, on the terms that Lewis XIV. thought fit to offer. By these terms he was to remain in full and quiet possession of all he had acquired since the years 1678 and 1679; among which acquisitions that of Luxemburg and that of Strasburg was comprehended. The conditions of this truce were so advantageous to France, that all her intrigues were employed to obtain a definitive treaty of peace upon the same conditions. But this was neither the interest nor the intention of the other contracting powers. The imperial arms had been very successful against the Turks. This success, as well as the troubles that followed upon it in the Ottoman armies and at the Porte, gave reasonable expectation of concluding a peace on that side, and, this peace concluded, the emperor and the empire and the King of Spain would have been in a much better posture to treat with France. With these views that were wise and just, the league of Augsburg was made between the emperor, the kings of Spain and Sweden as princes of the empire, and the other circles and princes. This league was purely defensive. An express article declared it to be so, and as it had no other regard, it was not only conformable to the laws and constitutions of the empire and to the practice of all nations, but even to the terms of the act of truce so lately concluded. This pretence there-

fore for breaking the truce, seizing the electorate of Cologne, invading the palatinate, besieging Philipsburg, and carrying unexpected and undeclared war into the empire could not be supported, nor is it possible to read the reasons published by France at this time, and drawn from her fears of the imperial power, without laughter. As little pretence was there to complain, that the emperor refused to convert at once the truce into a definitive treaty; since if he had done so, he would have confirmed in a lump, and without any discussion, all the arbitrary decrees of those chambers or courts that France had erected to cover her usurpations, and would have given up almost a sixth part of the provinces of the empire, that France one way or other had possessed herself of. The pretensions of the Duchess of Orleans on the succession of her father and her brother, which were disputed by the then Elector Palatine and were to be determined by the laws and customs of the empire, afforded as little pretence for beginning this war as any of the former allegations. The exclusion of the cardinal of Furstenberg, who had been elected to the archbishopric of Cologne, was capable of being aggravated; but even in this case his most Christian majesty opposed his judgment and his authority against the judgment and authority of that holy father, whose eldest son he was proud to be called. In short, the true reason why Lewis XIV. began that cruel war with the empire, two years after he had concluded a cessation of hostilities for twenty, was this: he resolved to keep what he had got, and therefore he resolved to encourage the Turks to continue the war. He did this effectually by invading Germany at the very instant when the Sultan was sueing for peace. Notwithstanding this, the Turks were in treaty again the following year; and good policy should have obliged the emperor, since he could not hope to carry on this war and that against France at the same time, with vigour and effect, to conclude a peace with the least dangerous enemy of the two. The decision of his disputes with France could not be deferred, his designs against the Hungarians were in part accomplished, for his son was declared king, and the settlement of that crown in his family was made, and the rest of these as well as those that he formed against the Turks might be deferred. But the councils of Vienna judged differently and insisted even at this critical moment on the most exorbitant terms; on some of such a nature that the Turks showed more humanity and a better sense of religion in refusing than they in asking them. Thus the war went on in Hungary, and proved a constant diversion in favour of France during the whole course of that which Lewis XIV. began at this time; for the treaty of Carlowitz was posterior to that of Ryswick. The empire, Spain, England, and Holland engaged in the war with France, and on them the emperor left the burden of it. In the short war of 1667, he was not so much as a party, and instead of assisting the King of Spain, which it must be owned he was in good condition of doing, he

bargained for dividing this prince's succession, as I have observed above. In the war of 1670, he made some feeble efforts. In this of 1688 he did still less, and in the war which broke out at the beginning of the present century he did nothing, at least after the first campaign in Italy, and after the engagements that England and Holland took by the grand alliance. In a word, from the time that an opposition to France became a common cause in Europe, the house of Austria has been a drag upon it in many instances, and of considerable assistance to it in none. The accession of England to this cause, which was brought about by the revolution of 1688, might have made amends, and more than amends one would think, for this defect, and have thrown superiority of power and of success on the side of the confederates, with whom she took part against France. This I say might be imagined, without overrating the power of England or undervalueing that of France, and it was imagined at that time. How it proved otherwise in the event; how France came triumphant out of the war that ended by the treaty of Ryswick, and though she gave up a great deal, yet preserved the greatest and the best part of her conquests and acquisitions made since the treaties of Westphalia and the Pyrenees; how she acquired by the gift of Spain that whole monarchy for one of her princes, though she had no reason to expect the least part of it without a war at one time, nor the great lot of it even by a war at any time; in short, how the wound up advantageously the ambitious system she had been fifty years in weaving; how she concluded a war in which she was defeated on every side and exhausted, with little diminution of the provinces and barriers acquired to France, and with the quiet possession of Spain and the Indies to a prince of the house of Bourbon: all this, my lord, will be the subject of your researches, when you come down to the latter part of the last period of modern history.

LETTER VIII.

The same subject continued from the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight.

YOUR lordship will find, that the objects proposed by the alliance of 1689 between the emperor and the states, to which England acceded, and which was the foundation of the whole confederacy then formed, were no less than to restore all things to the terms of the Westphalian and Pyrenean treaties, by the war; and to preserve them in that state after the war, by a defensive alliance and guaranty of the same confederate powers against France. The particular as well as general meaning of this engagement was plain enough: and if it had not been

so, the sense of it would have been sufficiently determined by that separate article, in which England and Holland obliged themselves to ‘assist the house of Austria, in taking and keeping possession of the Spanish monarchy, whenever the case should happen of the death of Charles II. without lawful heirs.’ This engagement was double, and thereby relative to the whole political system of Europe, also affected by the power and pretensions of France. Hitherto the power of France had been alone regarded, and her pretensions seemed to have been forgot: or to what purpose should they have been remembered, whilst Europe was so unhappily constituted, that the States at whose expense she increased her power, and their friends and allies, thought that they did enough upon every occasion if they made some tolerable composition with her? They who were not in circumstances to refuse confirming present, were little likely to take effectual measures against future, usurpations. But now, as the alarm was greater than ever, by the outrages that France had committed, and the intrigues she had carried on, by the little regard she had shown to public faith, and by the airs of authority she had assumed twenty years together: so was the spirit against her raised to a higher pitch, and the means of reducing her power, or at least of checking it, were increased. The princes and states who had neglected or favoured the growth of this power, which all of them had done in their turns, saw their error, saw the necessity of repairing it, and saw that unless they could check the power of France, by uniting a power superior to hers, it would be impossible to hinder her from succeeding in her great designs on the Spanish succession. The court of England had submitted not many years before to abet her usurpations, and the King of England had stooped to be her pensioner. But the crime was not national. On the contrary, the nation had cried out loudly against it, even whilst it was committing; and as soon as ever the abdication of King James, and the elevation of the Prince of Orange to the throne of England happened, the nation engaged with all imaginable zeal in the common cause of Europe, to reduce the exorbitant power of France, to prevent her future and to revenge her past attempts: for even a spirit of revenge prevailed, and the war was a war of anger as well as of interest.

Unhappily this zeal was neither well conducted, nor well seconded. It was zeal without success, in the first of the two wars that followed the year 1688; and zeal without knowledge, in both of them. I enter into no detail concerning the events of these two wars. This only I observe on the first of them, that the treaties of Ryswick were far from answering the ends proposed and the engagements taken by the first grand alliance. The power of France, with respect to extent of dominions and strength of barrier, was not reduced to the terms of the Pyrenean treaty, no not to those of the treaty of Nimeghen. Lorraine was restored indeed with very considerable reserves, and the places

taken or usurped on the other side of the Rhine ; but then Strasbourg was yielded up absolutely to France by the emperor, and by the empire. The concessions to Spain were great, but so were the conquests and the encroachments made upon her by France, since the treaty of Nimeghen ; and she got little at Ryswick, I believe nothing more than she had saved at Nimeghen before. All these concessions however, as well as the acknowledgment of King William, and others made by Lewis XIV. after he had taken Ath and Barcelona, even during the course of the negotiations, compared with the losses and repeated defeats of the allies and the ill state of the confederacy, surprised the generality of mankind, who had not been accustomed to so much moderation and generosity on the part of this prince. But the pretensions of the house of Bourbon, on the Spanish succession, remained the same. Nothing had been done to weaken them ; nothing was preparing to oppose them ; and the opening of this succession was visibly at hand, for Charles II. had been in immediate danger of dying about this time. His death could not be a remote event ; and all the good queen's endeavours to be got with child had proved ineffectual. The league dissolved, all the forces of the confederates dispersed, and many disbanded ; France continuing armed, her forces by sea and land increased and held in readiness to act on all sides, it was plain that the confederates had failed in the first object of the grand alliance, that of reducing the power of France ; by succeeding in which alone they could have been able to keep the second engagement, that of securing the succession of Spain to the house of Austria.

After this peace what remained to be done ? In the whole nature of things there remained but three. To abandon all care of the Spanish succession was one ; to compound with France upon this succession was another ; and to prepare, like her, during the interval of peace, to make an advantageous war whenever Charles II. should die was a third. Now the first of these was to leave Spain, and in leaving Spain to leave all Europe, in some sort at the mercy of France : since whatever disposition the Spaniards should make of their crown, they were quite unable to support it against France : since the emperor could do little without his allies : and since Bavaria, the third pretender, could do still less, and might find, in such a case, his account perhaps better in treating with the house of Bourbon than with that of Austria. More needs not be said on this head ; but on the other two, which I shall consider together, several facts are proper to be mentioned, and several reflections necessary to be made.

We might have counter-worked, no doubt, in their own methods of policy, the councils of France, who made peace to dissolve the confederacy, and great concessions, with very suspicious generosity, to gain the Spaniards : we might have waited like them, that is in arms, the death of Charles II., and have fortified in the mean time the dis-

positions of the king, the court and people of Spain, against the pretensions of France : we might have made the peace, which was made some time after that, between the emperor and the Turks, and have obliged the former at any rate to have secured the peace of Hungary, and to have prepared, by these and other expedients, for the war that would inevitably break out on the death of the King of Spain.

But all such measures were rendered impracticable, by the emperor chiefly. Experience had shown that the powers who engaged in alliance with him must expect to take the whole burden of his cause upon themselves ; and that Hungary would maintain a perpetual diversion in favour of France, since he could not resolve to lighten the tyrannical yoke he had established in that country and in Transylvania, nor his ministers to part with the immense confiscations they had appropriated to themselves. Past experience showed this ; and the experience that followed confirmed it very fatally. But further ; there was not only little assistance to be expected from him by those who should engage in his quarrel : he did them hurt of another kind, and deprived them of many advantages by false measures of policy and unskilful negotiations. Whilst the death of Charles II. was expected almost daily, the court of Vienna seemed to have forgot the court of Madrid, and all the pretensions on that crown. When the count D'Harrach was sent thither, the imperial councils did something worse. The King of Spain was ready to declare the archduke Charles his successor ; he was desirous to have this young prince sent into Spain : the bent of the people was in favour of Austria, or it had been so, and might have been easily turned the same way again. At court no cabal was yet formed in favour of Bourbon, and a very weak intrigue was on foot in favour of the electoral Prince of Bavaria. Not only Charles might have been on the spot ready to reap the succession, but a German army might have been there to defend it ; for the court of Madrid insisted on having 12,000 of these troops, and rather than not have them offered to contribute to the payment of them privately ; because it would have been too unpopular among the Spaniards, and too prejudicial to the Austrian interest, to have had it known that the emperor declined the payment of a body of his own troops that were demanded to secure that monarchy to his son. These proposals were half refused, and half evaded ; and in return to the offer of the crown of Spain to the archduke, the imperial councils asked the government of Milan for him. They thought it a point of deep policy to secure the Italian provinces, and to leave to England and Holland the care of the Low Countries, of Spain, and the Indies. By declining these proposals the house of Austria renounced in some sort the whole succession ; at least she gave England and Holland reasons, whatever engagements these powers had taken, to refuse the harder task of putting her into possession by force ; when she might, and would not

procure, to the English and Dutch and her other allies, the easier task of defending her in this possession.

I said that the measures mentioned above were rendered impracticable by the emperor; chiefly, because they were rendered so likewise by other circumstances at the same conjuncture. A principal one I shall mention, and it shall be drawn from the state of our own country, and the disposition of our people. Let us take this up from King William's accession to our crown. During the whole progress that Lewis XIV. made towards such exorbitant power, as gave him well grounded hopes of acquiring at last to his family the Spanish monarchy, England had been either an idle spectator of all that passed on the continent, or a faint and uncertain ally against France, or a warm and sure ally on her side, or a partial mediator between her and the powers confederated in their common defence. The revolution produced as great a change in our foreign conduct, as in our domestic establishment; and our nation engaged with great spirit in the war of 1688. But then this spirit was rash, presumptuous, and ignorant, ill conducted at home, and ill seconded abroad: all which has been touched already. We had waged no long wars on the continent, nor been very deeply concerned in foreign confederacies, since the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The history of Edward III., however, and of the first twelve or fifteen years of Henry VI., might have taught us some general but useful lessons, drawn from remote times, but applicable to the present. So might the example of Henry VIII., who squandered away great sums for the profit of taking a town, or the honour of having an emperor in his pay; and who divided afterwards by treaty the kingdom of France between himself and Charles V., with success so little answerable to such an undertaking, that it is hard to believe his imperial and English majesty were both in earnest. If they were so, they were both the bubbles of their presumption. But it seems more likely that Henry VIII. was bubbled on this occasion by the great hopes that Charles held out to flatter his vanity: as he had been bubbled by his father-in-law, Ferdinand, at the beginning of his reign, in the war of Navarre. But these reflections were not made, nor had we enough considered the example of Elizabeth, the last of our princes who had made any considerable figure abroad, and from whom we might have learned to act with vigour but to engage with caution, and always to proportion our assistance according to our abilities and the real necessities of our allies. The frontiers of France were now so fortified, her commerce and her naval force were so increased, her armies were grown so numerous, her troops were so disciplined, so inured to war, and so animated by a long course of successful campaigns, that they who looked on the situation of Europe could not fail to see how difficult the enterprise of reducing her power was become. Difficult as it was, we were obliged, on every account and by reasons of all kinds, to en-

gage in it: but then we should have engaged with more forecast, and have conducted ourselves in the management of it, not with less alacrity and spirit, but with more order, more economy, and a better application of our efforts. But they who governed were glad to engage us at any rate: and we entered on this great scheme of action, as our nation is too apt to do, hurried on by the ruling passion of the day. I have been told by several, who were on the stage of the world at this time, that the generality of our people believed and were encouraged to believe, the war could not be long, if the king was vigorously supported; and there is a humdrum speech of a speaker of the House of Commons, I think, who humbly desired his majesty to take this opportunity of reconquering his ancient duchy of Aquitaine. We were soon awaked from these gaudy dreams. In seven or eight years no impression had been made on France, that was besieged as it were on every side; and after repeated defeats in the Low Countries where King William laid the principal stress of the war, his sole triumph was the retaking of Namur, that had been taken by the French a few years before. Unstained by success abroad, we are not to wonder that the spirit flagged at home; nor that the discontents of those who were averse to the established government, uniting with the far greater number of those who disliked the administration, inflamed the general discontents of the nation, oppressed with taxes, pillaged by usurpers, plundered at sea, and disappointed at land. As we ran into extremes always, some would have continued this war at any rate, even at the same rate; but it was not possible they should prevail in such a situation of affairs, and such a disposition of minds. They who got by the war, and made immense fortunes by the necessities of the public, were not so numerous nor so powerful as they have been since. The moneyed interest was not yet a rival able to cope with the landed interest, either in the nation, or in parliament. The great corporations, that had been erected more to serve the turn of party than for any real national use, aimed indeed even then at the strength and influence which they have since acquired in the legislature; but they had not made the same progress, by promoting national corruption, as they and the court have made since. In short, the other extreme prevailed. The generality of people grew as fond of getting out of the war as they had been of entering into it: and thus far perhaps, considering how it had been conducted, they were not much to be blamed. But this was not all; for when King William had made the peace, our martial spirit became at once so pacific, that we seemed resolved to meddle no more in the affairs of the continent, at least to employ our arms no more in the quarrels that might arise there; and accordingly we reduced our troops in England to 7000 men.

I have sometimes considered, in reflecting on these passages, what I should have done, if I had sat in parliament at that time; and have

been forced to own myself, that I should have voted for disbanding the army then, as I voted in the following parliament for censuring the partition treaties. I am forced to own this, because I remember how imperfect my notions were of the situation of Europe in that extraordinary crisis, and how much I saw the true interest of my own country in a half light. But, my lord, I own it with some shame; because in truth nothing could be more absurd than the conduct we held. What! because we had not reduced the power of France by the war, nor excluded the house of Bourbon from the Spanish succession, nor compounded with her upon it by the peace; and because the house of Austria had not helped herself, nor put it into our power to help her with more advantage and better prospect of success—were we to leave that whole succession open to the invasions of France, and to suffer even the contingency to subsist, of seeing those monarchies united? What! because it was become extravagant, after the trials so lately made, to think ourselves any longer engaged by treaty or obliged by good policy to put the house of Austria in possession of the whole Spanish monarchy, and to defend her in this possession by force of arms, were we to leave the whole at the mercy of France? If we were not to do so, if we were not to do one of the three things that I said above remained to be done, and if the emperor put it out of our power to do another of them with advantage; were we to put it still more out of our power, and to wait unarmed for the death of the King of Spain? In fine, if we had not the prospect of disputing with France, so successfully as we might have had it, the Spanish succession whenever it should be open; were we not only to show by disarming, that we would not dispute it at all, but to censure likewise the second of the three things mentioned above and which King William put in practice, the compounding with France, to prevent if possible a war in which we were averse to engage?

Allow me to push these reflections a little further, and to observe to your lordship, that if the proposal of sending the archduke into Spain had been accepted in time by the imperial court, and taken effect and become a measure of the confederacy, that war indeed would have been protracted; but France could not have hindered the passage of this prince and his German forces, and our fleet would have been better employed in escorting them, and in covering the coasts of Spain and of the dominions of that crown both in Europe and in America, than it was in so many unmeaning expeditions from the battle of La Hogue to the end of the war. France indeed would have made her utmost efforts to have had satisfaction on her pretensions, as ill founded as they were. She would have ended that war, as we began the next, when we demanded a reasonable satisfaction for the emperor; and though I think that the allies would have had, in very many respects, more advantage in defending Spain, than in attacking France; yet,

upon a supposition that the defence would have been as ill conducted as the attack was, and that by consequence, whether Charles II. had lived to the conclusion of this war, or had died before it, the war must have ended in some partition or other; this partition would have been made by the Spaniards themselves. They had been forced to compound with France on her former pretensions, and they must and they would have compounded on these, with an Austrian prince on the throne, just as they compounded, and probably much better than they compounded, on the pretensions we supported against them, when they had a prince of Bourbon on their throne. France could not have distressed the Spaniards, nor have overrun their monarchy, if they had been united; and they would have been united in this case, and supported by the whole confederacy, as we distressed both France and them, overrun their monarchy in one hemisphere, and might have done so in both, when they were disunited, and supported by France alone. France would not have acted, in such negotiations, the ridiculous part which the emperor acted in those that led to the peace of Utrecht, nor have made her bargain worse by neglecting to make it in time. But the war ending as it did, though I cannot see how King William could avoid leaving the crown of Spain and that entire monarchy at the discretion of Lewis XIV., otherwise than by compounding to prevent a new war, he was in no sort prepared to make; yet it is undeniable, that, by consenting to a partition of their monarchy, he threw the Spaniards into the arms of France. The first partition might have taken place, perhaps, if the electoral prince of Bavaria had lived, whom the French and Spaniards too would have seen much more willingly than the archduke on the throne of Spain. For among all the parties into which that court was divided in 1698, when this treaty was made, that of Austria was grown the weakest, by the disgust taken at a German queen, and at the rapacity and insolence of her favourites. The French were looked upon with esteem and kindness at Madrid; but the Germans were become, or growing to be, objects of contempt to the ministers, and of aversion to the people. The electoral prince died in 1699. The star of Austria, so fatal to all those who were obstacles to the ambition of that house, prevailed, as the elector expressed himself in the first pangs of his grief. The state of things changed very much by this death. The archduke was to have Spain and the Indies, according to a second partition; and the Spaniards, who had expressed great resentment at the first, were pushed beyond their bearing by this. They soon appeared to be so; for the second treaty of partition was signed in March 1700; and the will was made, to the best of my remembrance, in the October following. I shall not enter here into many particulars concerning these great events. They will be related faithfully, and I hope fully explained, in a work which your lordship may take the trouble very probably of

perusing some time or other, and which I shall rather leave, than give to the public. Something however must be said more, to continue and wind up this summary of the latter period of modern history.

France then saw her advantage, and improved it no doubt, though not in the manner nor with the circumstances that some lying scribblers of memorials and anecdotes have advanced. She had sent one of the ablest men of her court to that of Madrid, the Marshal of Harcourt, and she had stipulated in the second treaty of partition that the archduke should go neither into Spain nor the duchy of Milan during the life of Charles II. She was willing to have her option between a treaty and a will. By the acceptation of the will all King William's measures were broken. He was unprepared for war as much as when he made these treaties to prevent one; and if he meant in making them, what some wise but refining men have suspected, and what, I confess, I see no reason to believe, only to gain time by the difficulty of executing them, and to prepare for making war whenever the death of the King of Spain should alarm mankind, and rouse his own subjects out of their inactivity and neglect of foreign interests,—if so, he was disappointed in that too ; for France took possession of the whole monarchy at once and with universal concurrence, at least without opposition or difficulty, in favour of the Duke of Anjou. By what has been observed, or hinted, rather, very shortly, and I fear a little confusedly, it is plain, that reducing the power of France, and securing the whole Spanish succession to the house of Austria, were two points that King William, at the head of the British and Dutch commonwealths and of the greatest confederacy Europe had seen, was obliged to give up. All the acquisitions that France cared to keep for the maintenance of her power were confirmed to her by the treaty of Ryswick; and King William allowed, indirectly at least, the pretensions of the house of Bourbon to the Spanish succession, as Lewis XIV. allowed, in the same manner, those of the house of Austria by the treaties of partition. Strange situation ! in which no expedient remained to prepare for an event, visibly so near, and of such vast importance, as the death of the King of Spain, but a partition of his monarchy without his consent or his knowledge ! If King William had not made this partition, the emperor would have made one, and with as little regard to trade, to the barrier of the seven provinces, or to the general system of Europe, as had been showed by him when he made the private treaty with France already mentioned in 1668. The ministers of Vienna were not wanting to insinuate to those of France overtures of a separate treaty, as more conducive to their common interests than the accession of his imperial majesty to that of partition. But the councils of Versailles judged very reasonably that a partition made with England and Holland would be more effectual than any other if a partition was to take place; and that such a partition would be just as effectual as one made

with the emperor to furnish arguments to the emissaries of France, and motives to the Spanish councils, if a will in favour of France could be obtained. I repeat it again: I cannot see what King William could do in such circumstances as he found himself in after thirty years' struggle, except what he did; neither can I see how he could do what he did, especially after the resentment expressed by the Spaniards, and the furious memorial presented by Canales on the conclusion of the first treaty of partition, without apprehending that the consequence would be a will in favour of France. He was in the worst of all political circumstances, in that wherein no one good measure remains to be taken, and out of which he left the two nations, at the head of whom he had been so long, to fight and negotiate themselves and their confederates as well as they could.

When this will was made and accepted, Lewis XIV. had succeeded, and the powers in opposition to him had failed in all the great objects of interest and ambition which they had kept in sight for more than forty years, that is, from the beginning of the present period. The actors changed their parts in the tragedy that followed. The power that had so long and so cruelly attacked, was now to defend the Spanish monarchy; and the powers that had so long defended it were now to attack it. Let us see how this was brought about; and that we may see it the better, and make a better judgment of all that passed from the death of Charles II. to the peace of Utrecht, let us go back to the time of his death, and consider the circumstances that formed this complicated state of affairs in three views: a view of right, a view of policy, and a view of power.

The right of succeeding to the crown of Spain would have been undoubtedly in the children of Maria Theresa, that is, in the house of Bourbon, if this right had not been barred by the solemn renunciations so often mentioned. The pretensions of the house of Austria were founded on these renunciations, on the ratification of them by the Pyrenean treaty, and the confirmation of them by the will of Philip IV. The pretensions of the house of Bourbon were founded on a supposition; it was indeed no more, and a vain one too, that these renunciations were in their nature null. On this foot the dispute of right stood during the life of Charles II., and on the same it would have continued to stand even after his death, if the renunciations had remained unshaken; if his will, like that of his father, had confirmed them, and had left the crown, in pursuance of them, to the house of Austria. But the will of Charles II., annulling these renunciations, took away the sole foundation of the Austrian pretensions; for, however this act might be obtained, it was just as valid as his father's, and was confirmed by the universal concurrence of the Spanish nation to the new settlement he made of that crown. Let it be, as I think it ought to be granted, that the true heirs could not claim against renunciations that

were, if I may say so, conditions of their birth; but Charles II. had certainly as good a right to change the course of succession agreeably to the order of nature and the condition of that monarchy after his true heirs were born, as Philip IV. had to change it, contrary to this order and this constitution, before they were born, or at any other time. He had as good a right, in short, to dispense with the Pyrenean treaty, and to set it aside in this respect, as his father had to make it; so that the renunciations being annulled by that party to the Pyrenean treaty who had exacted them, they could be deemed no longer binding, by virtue of this treaty, on the party who had made them. The sole question that remained, therefore, between these rival houses as to right was this,—whether the engagements taken by Lewis XIV. in the partition treaties obliged him to adhere to the terms of the last of them in all events, and to deprive his family of the succession which the King of Spain opened, and the Spanish nation offered to them, rather than to depart from a composition he had made, on pretensions that were disputable then, but were now out of dispute? It may be said, and it was said, that the treaties of partition being absolute, without any condition or exception relative to any disposition the King of Spain had made or might make of his succession in favour of Bourbon or Austria ; the disposition made by his will in favour of the Duke of Anjou could not affect the engagements so lately taken by Lewis XIV. in these treaties, nor dispense with a literal observation of them. This might be true on strict principles of justice; but I apprehend that none of these powers who exclaimed so loudly against the perfidy of France in this case, would have been more scrupulous in a parallel case. The maxim, *summum jus est summa injuria*, would have been quoted, and the rigid letter of treaties would have been softened by an equitable interpretation of their spirit and intention. His imperial majesty, above all, had not the least colour of right to exclaim against France on this occasion ; for in general, if his family was to be stripped of all the dominions they have acquired by breach of faith, and means much worse than the acceptation of the will, even allowing all the invidious circumstances imputed to the conduct of France to be true, the Austrian family would sink from their present grandeur to that low state they were in two or three centuries ago. In particular, the emperor who had constantly refused to accede to the treaties of partition, or to submit to the dispositions made by them, had not the least plausible pretence to object to Lewis XIV., that he departed from them. Thus I think the right of the two houses stood on the death of Charles II. The right of the Spaniards, an independent nation, to regulate their own succession, or to receive the prince whom their dying monarch had called to it; and the right of England and Holland to regulate this succession, to divide and parcel out this monarchy in different lots, it would be equally foolish to go about to establish. One is too

evident, the other too absurd, to admit of any proof. But enough has been said concerning right, which was in truth little regarded by any of the parties concerned immediately or remotely in the whole course of these proceedings. Particular interests were alone regarded, and these were pursued as ambition, fear, resentment, and vanity directed: I mean the ambition of the two houses contending for superiority of power; the fear of England and Holland lest this superiority should become too great in either; the resentment of Spain at the dismemberment of that monarchy projected by the partition treaties; and the vanity of that nation, as well as of the princes of the house of Bourbon; for as vanity mingled with resentment to make the will, vanity had a great share in determining the acceptance of it.

Let us now consider the same conjuncture in a view of policy. The policy of the Spanish councils was this. They could not brook that their monarchy should be divided: and this principle is expressed strongly in the will of Charles II., where he exhorts his subjects not to suffer any dismemberment or diminution of a monarchy founded by his predecessors with so much glory. Too weak to hinder this dismemberment by their own strength, too well apprised of the little force and little views of the court of Vienna, and their old allies having engaged to procure this dismemberment even by force of arms; nothing remained for them to do, upon this principle, but to detach France from the engagements of the partition treaties, by giving their whole monarchy to a prince of the house of Bourbon. As much as may have been said concerning the negotiations of France to obtain a will in her favour, and yet to keep in reserve the advantages stipulated for her by the partition-treaties, if such a will could not be obtained, and though I am persuaded that the Marshal of Harcourt, who helped to procure this will, made his court to Lewis XIV. as much as the Marshal of Tallard, who negotiated the partitions; yet it is certain, that the acceptance of the will was not a measure definitely taken at Versailles when the King of Spain died. The alternative divided those councils, and without entering at this time into the arguments urged on each side, adhering to the partitions seemed the cause of France, accepting the will that of the house of Bourbon.

It has been said by men of great weight in the councils of Spain, and was said at that time by men as little fond of the house of Bourbon, or of the French nation, as their fathers had been; that if England and Holland had not formed a confederacy and begun a war, they would have made Philip V. as good a Spaniard as any of the preceding Philips, and not have endured the influence of French councils in the administration of their government; but that we threw them entirely into the hands of France when we began the war, because the fleets and armies of this crown being necessary to their defence, they could not avoid submitting to this influence as long as the same necessity

continued; and, in fact, we have seen that the influence lasted no longer. But notwithstanding this, it must be confessed, that a war was unavoidable. The immediate securing of commerce and of barriers, the preventing a union of the two monarchies in some future time, and the preservation of a certain degree at least of equality in the scales of power, were points too important to England, Holland, and the rest of Europe, to be rested on the moderation of French, and the vigour of Spanish councils, under a prince of the house of France. If satisfaction to the house of Austria, to whose rights England and Holland showed no great regard whilst they were better founded than they were since the will, had been alone concerned; a drop of blood spilt, or five shillings spent in the quarrel, would have been too much profusion. But this was properly the scale into which it became the common interest to throw all the weight that could be taken out of that of Bourbon. And therefore your lordship will find, that when negotiations with d'Avaux were set on foot in Holland to prevent a war, or rather on our part to gain time to prepare for it, in which view the Dutch and we had both acknowledged Philip king of Spain; the great article on which we insisted was, that reasonable satisfaction should be given the emperor, upon his pretensions founded on the treaty of partition. We could do no otherwise; and France, who offered to make the treaty of Ryswick the foundation of that treaty, could do no otherwise than refuse to consent that the treaty of partition should be so, after accepting the will, and thereby engaging to oppose all partition or dismemberment of the Spanish monarchy. I should mention none of the other demands of England and Holland, if I could neglect to point out to your lordship's observation, that the same artifice was employed at this time, to perplex the more a negotiation that could not succeed on other accounts, as we saw employed in the course of the war, by the English and Dutch ministers, to prevent the success of negotiations that might and ought to have succeeded. The demand I mean is that of a 'liberty not only to explain the terms proposed, but to increase or amplify them, in the course of the negotiation.' I do not remember the words, but this is the sense, and this was the meaning of the confederates in both cases.

In the former, King William was determined to begin the war by all the rules of good policy; since he could not obtain, nay, since France could not grant in that conjuncture, nor without being forced to it by a war, what he was obliged by these very rules to demand. He intended therefore nothing by this negotiation, if it may be called such, but to preserve forms and appearances, and perhaps, which many have suspected, to have time to prepare, as I hinted just now, both abroad and at home. Many things concurred to favour his preparations abroad. The alarm, that had been given by the acceptation of the will, was increased by every step that France made to secure the effect

of it. Thus, for instance, the surprising and seizing the Dutch troops, in the same night, and at the same hour, that were dispersed in the garrisons of the Spanish Netherlands, was not excused by the necessity of securing those places to the obedience of Philip, nor softened by the immediate dismission of those troops. The impression it made was much the same as those of the surprises and seizures of France in former usurpations. No one knew then, that the sovereignty of the ten provinces was to be yielded up to the Elector of Bavaria ; and every one saw that there remained no longer any barrier between France and the seven provinces. At home, the disposition of the nation was absolutely turned to a war with France, on the death of King James II., by the acknowledgment Lewis XIV. made of his son as king of England. I know what has been said in excuse for this measure, taken, as I believe, on female importunity ; but certainly without any regard to public faith, to the true interest of France in those circumstances, or to the true interest of the prince thus acknowledged, in any. It was said, that the treaty of Ryswick obliging his most Christian majesty only not to disturb King William in his possession, he might, without any violation of it, have acknowledged this prince as King of England ; according to the political casuistry of the French, and the example of France, who finds no fault with the powers that treat with the kings of England, although the kings of England retain the title of kings of France ; as well as the example of Spain, who makes no complaints that other states treat with the kings of France, although the kings of France retain the title of Navarre. But besides that the examples are not apposite, because no other powers acknowledge in form the King of England to be King of France, nor the King of France to be King of Navarre ; with what face could the French excuse this measure ? Could they excuse it by urging that they adhere to the strict letter of one article of the treaty of Ryswick, against the plain meaning of that very article and against the whole tenor of that treaty ; in the same breath with which they justified the acceptance of the will, by pretending they adhered to the supposed spirit and general intention of the treaties of partition, in contradiction to the letter, to the specific engagements, and to the whole purport of those treaties ? This part of the conduct of Lewis XIV. may appear justly the more surprising, because in most other parts of his conduct at the same time, and in some to his disadvantage, he acted cautiously, endeavoured to calm the minds of his neighbours, to reconcile Europe to his grandson's elevation, and to avoid all show of beginning hostilities.

Though King William was determined to engage in a war with France and Spain, yet the same good policy that determined him to engage, determined him not to engage too deeply. The engagement taken in the grand alliance of 1701 is, 'To procure an equitable and 'reasonable satisfaction to his imperial majesty for his pretension to

'the Spanish succession ; and sufficient security to the King of England, 'and the States General, for their dominions, and for the navigation 'and commerce of their subjects, and to prevent the union of the two 'monarchies of France and Spain.' As King of England, as state-holder of Holland, he neither could, nor did engage any further. It may be disputed perhaps among speculative politicians, whether the balance of power in Europe would have been better preserved by that scheme of partition, which the treaties, and particularly the last of them proposed, or by that which the grand alliance proposed to be the object of the war ? I think there is little room for such a dispute, as I shall have occasion to say hereafter more expressly. In this place I shall only say, that the object of this war, which king William meditated, and Queen Anne waged, was a partition, by which a prince of the house of Bourbon, already acknowledged by us and the Dutch as King of Spain, was to be left on the throne of that dismembered monarchy. The wisdom of those councils saw that the peace of Europe might be restored and secured on this foot, and that the liberties of Europe would be in no danger.

The scales of the balance of power will never be exactly poised, nor in the precise point of equality either discernible or necessary to be discerned. It is sufficient in this, as in other human affairs, that the deviation be not too great. Some there will always be. A constant attention to these deviations is therefore necessary. When they are little, their increase may be easily prevented by early care and the precautions that good policy suggests. But when they become great for want of this care and these precautions, or by the force of unforeseen events, more vigour is to be exerted, and greater efforts to be made. But even in such cases, much reflection is necessary on all the circumstances that form the conjuncture ; lest, by attacking with ill success, the deviation be confirmed, and the power that is deemed already exorbitant become more so ; and lest by attacking with good success, whilst one scale is pillaged, too much weight of power be thrown into the other. In such cases, he who has considered, in the histories of former ages, the strange revolutions that time produces, and the perpetual flux and reflux of public as well as private fortunes, of kingdoms and states as well as of those who govern or are governed in them, will incline to think, that if the scales can be brought back by a war, nearly, though not exactly, to the point they were at before this great deviation from it, the rest may be left to accidents, and to the use that good policy is able to make of them.

When Charles V. was at the height of his power, and in the zenith of his glory, when a king of France and a pope were at once his prisoners, it must be allowed, that his situation and that of his neighbours compared, they had as much at least to fear from him and from the house of Austria, as the neighbours of Lewis XIV. had to fear

from him and from the house of Bourbon, when after all his other success, one of his grandchildren was placed on the Spanish throne. And yet among all the conditions of the several leagues against Charles V., I do not remember that it was ever stipulated, that ‘no peace should be made with him as long as he continued to be ‘emperor and King of Spain; nor as long as any Austrian prince ‘continued capable of uniting on his head the imperial and Spanish ‘crowns.’

If your lordship makes the application, you will find that the difference of some circumstances does not hinder this example from being very apposite, and strong to the present purpose. Charles V. was emperor and king of Spain; but neither was Lewis XIV. king of Spain, nor Philip V. king of France. That had happened in one instance, which it was apprehended might happen in the other. It had happened, and it was reasonably to be apprehended that it might happen again, and that the imperial and Spanish crowns might continue, not only in the same family, but on the same heads; for measures were taken to secure the succession of both to Philip the son of Charles. We do not find however that any confederacy was formed, any engagement taken, nor any war made to remove or prevent this great evil. The princes and states of Europe contented themselves to oppose the designs of Charles V., and to check the growth of his power occasionally, and as interest invited, or necessity forced them to do; not constantly. They did perhaps too little against him, and sometimes too much for him; but if they did too little of one kind, time and accident did the rest. Distinct dominions, and different pretensions, created contrary interests in the house of Austria; and on the abdication of Charles V., his brother succeeded, not his son, to the empire. The house of Austria divided into a German and a Spanish branch; and if the two branches came to have a mutual influence on one another and frequently a common interest, it was not till one of them had fallen from grandeur, and till the other was rather aiming at it, than in possession of it. In short, Philip was excluded from the imperial throne by so natural a progression of causes and effects, arising not only in Germany but in his own family, that if a treaty had been made to exclude him from it in favour of Ferdinand, such a treaty might have been said very probably to have executed itself.

The precaution I have mentioned, and that was neglected in this case without any detriment to the common cause of Europe, was not neglected in the grand alliance of 1701. For in that, one of the ends proposed by the war is, to obtain an effectual security against the contingent union of the crowns of France and Spain. The will of Charles II. provides against the same contingency; and this great principle, of preventing too much dominion and power from falling to the lot of either of the families of Bourbon or Austria, seemed to be

agreed on all sides; since in the partition-treaty the same precaution was taken against a union of the imperial and Spanish crowns. King William was enough piqued against France. His ancient prejudices were strong and well founded. He had been worsted in war, overreached in negotiation, and personally affronted by her. England and Holland were sufficiently alarmed and animated, and a party was not wanting, even in our island, ready to approve any engagements he would have taken against France and Spain, and in favour of the house of Austria; though we were less concerned, by any national interest, than any other power that took part in the war, either then or afterwards. But this prince was far from taking a part beyond that which the particular interests of England and Holland, and the general interest of Europe, necessarily required. Pique must have no more a place than affection, in deliberations of this kind. To have engaged to dethrone Philip, out of resentment to Lewis XIV., would have been a resolution worthy of Charles XII., king of Sweden, who sacrificed his country, his people, and himself at last, to his revenge. To have engaged to conquer the Spanish monarchy for the house of Austria, or to go, in favour of that family, one step beyond those that were necessary to keep this house on a footing of rivalry with the other, would have been as I have hinted, to act the part of a vassal, not of an ally. The former pawns his state, and ruins his subjects, for the interest of his superior lord, perhaps for his lord's humour, or his passion; the latter goes no further than his own interests carry him, nor makes war for those of another, nor even for his own, if they are remote, and contingent, as if he fought pro aris et focis, for his religion, his liberty, and his property. Agreeable to these principles of good policy, we entered into the war that began on the death of Charles II.; but we soon departed from them, as I shall have occasion to observe in considering the state of things at this remarkable conjuncture, in a view of strength.

Let me recall here what I have said somewhere else. They who are in the sinking scale of the balance of power do not easily nor soon come off from the habitual prejudices of superiority over their neighbours, nor from the confidence that such prejudices inspire. From the year 1667, to the end of that century, France had been constantly in arms, and her arms had been successful. She had sustained a war without any confederates against the principal powers of Europe confederated against her, and had finished it with advantage on every side just before the death of the King of Spain. She continued armed after the peace by sea and land. She increased her forces, whilst other nations reduced theirs, and was ready to defend or to invade her neighbours whilst, their confederacy being dissolved, they were in no condition to invade her, and in a bad one to defend themselves. Spain and France had now one common cause. The electors of Bavaria and

Cologne supported it in Germany; the Duke of Savoy was an ally, the Duke of Mantua a vassal of the two crowns in Italy. In a word, appearances were formidable on that side, and if a distrust of strength on the side of the confederacy had induced England and Holland to compound with France for a partition of the Spanish succession, there seemed to be still greater reason for this distrust after the acceptance of the will, the peaceable and ready submission of the entire monarchy of Spain to Philip, and all the measures taken to secure him in this possession. Such appearances might well impose. They did so on many, and on none more than on the French themselves, who engaged with great confidence and spirit in the war, when they found it as they might well expect it would be, unavoidable. The strength of France however, though great, was not so great as the French thought it, nor equal to the efforts they undertook to make. Their engagement to maintain the Spanish monarchy entire under the dominion of Philip exceeded their strength. Our engagement, to procure some outskirts of it for the house of Austria, was not in the same disproportion to our strength. If I speak positively on this occasion, yet I cannot be accused of presumption, because how disputable soever these points might be when they were points of political speculation, they are such no longer, and the judgment I make is dictated to me by experience. France threw herself into the sinking scale when she accepted the will. Her scale continued to sink during the whole course of the war, and might have been kept by the peace as low as the true interest of Europe required. What I remember to have heard the Duke of Marlborough say, before he went to take on him the command of the army in the Low Countries in 1702, proved true. The French misreckoned very much if they made the same comparison between their troops and those of their enemies, as they had made in precedent wars. Those that had been opposed to them in the last were raw for the most part when it began, the British particularly; but they had been disciplined, if I may say so, by their defeats. They were grown to be veteran at the peace of Ryswick, and though many had been disbanded, yet they had been disbanded lately, so that even these were easily formed anew, and the spirit that had been raised continued in all. Supplies of men to recruit the armies were more abundant on the side of the confederacy, than on that of the two crowns, a necessary consequence of which it seemed to be that those of the former would grow better, and those of the latter worse, in a long, extensive, and bloody war. I believe it proved so, and if my memory does not deceive me, the French were forced very early to send recruits to their armies as they send slaves to their galleys. A comparison between those who were to direct the councils and to conduct the armies on both sides, is a task it would become me little to undertake. The event showed that if France had had her Condé, her Turenne, or

her Luxemburg, to oppose the confederates, the confederates might have opposed to her with equal confidence, their Eugene of Savoy, their Marlborough, or their Starenberg. But there is one observation I cannot forbear to make. The alliances were concluded, the quotas were settled, and the season for taking the field approached, when King William died. The event could not fail to occasion some consternation on one side and to give some hopes on the other, for notwithstanding the ill success with which he made war generally, he was looked upon as the sole centre of union that could keep together the great confederacy then forming, and how much the French feared, from his life, had appeared a few years before, in the extravagant and indecent joy they expressed on a false report of his death. A short time showed how vain the fears of some and the hopes of others were. By his death the Duke of Marlborough was raised to the head of the army, and indeed of the confederacy, where he, a new, a private man, a subject, acquired by merit and by management a more deciding influence, than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain, had given to King William. Not only all the parts of that vast machine, the grand alliance, were kept more compact and entire, but a more rapid and vigorous motion was given to the whole, and, instead of languishing or disastrous campaigns, we saw every scene of the war full of action. All those wherein he appeared, and many of those wherein he was not then an actor, but abettor however of their action, were crowned with the most triumphant success. I take with pleasure this opportunity of doing justice to that great man, whose faults I knew, whose virtues I admired, and whose memory, as the greatest general and as the greatest minister that our country or perhaps any other has produced, I honour. But besides this, the observation I have made comes into my subject since it serves to point out to your lordship the proof of what I said above, that France undertook too much when she undertook to maintain the Spanish monarchy entire in the possession of Philip, and that we undertook no more than what was proportionable to our strength, when we undertook to weaken that monarchy by dismembering it in the hands of a prince of the house of Bourbon, which we had been disabled by ill fortune and worse conduct to keep out of them. It may be said that the great success of the confederates against France proves that their generals were superior to hers, but not that their forces and their national strength were so; that with the same force with which she was beaten, she might have been victorious; that if she had been so, or if the success of the war had varied or been less decisive against her in Germany, in the Low Countries, and in Italy, as it was in Spain, her strength would have appeared sufficient, and that of the confederacy insufficient. Many things may be urged to destroy this reasoning; I content myself with one. France could not long have made even the unsuccessful efforts she did make, if

England and Holland had done what it is undeniable they had strength to do; if besides pillaging, I do not say conquering, the Spanish West Indies, they had hindered the French from going to the South Sea; as they did annually during the whole course of the war without the least molestation, and from whence they imported into France in that time as much silver and gold as the whole specie of that kingdom amounted to. With this immense and constant supply of wealth, France was reduced in effect to bankruptcy before the end of the war. How much sooner must she have been so, if this supply had been kept from her? The confession of France herself is on my side. She confessed her inability to support what she had undertaken, when she sued for peace as early as the year 1706. She made her utmost efforts to answer the expectation of the Spaniards, and to keep their monarchy entire. When experience had made it evident that this was beyond her power, she thought herself justified to the Spanish nation, in consenting to a partition, and was ready to conclude a peace with the allies on the principles of their grand alliance. But as France seemed to flatter herself, till experience made her desirous to abandon an enterprise that exceeded her strength, you will find, my lord, that her enemies began to flatter themselves in their turn, and to form designs and take engagements that exceeded theirs. Great Britain was drawn into these engagements little by little; for I do not remember any parliamentary declaration for continuing the war till Philip should be dethroned, before the year 1706, and then such a declaration was judged necessary to second the resolution of our ministers and our allies, in departing from the principles of the grand alliance, and in proposing not only the reduction of the French, but the conquest of the Spanish monarchy as the objects of the war. This new plan had taken place, and we had begun to act upon it two years before, when the treaty with Portugal was concluded, and the Archduke Charles, now emperor, was sent into Portugal first, and into Catalonia afterwards, and was acknowledged and supported as King of Spain.

When your lordship peruses the anecdotes of the times here spoken of, and considers the cause and event of the great war which issued out on the death of the King of Spain, Charles II., and was ended by the treaties of Utrecht and Rastatt; you will find, that in order to form a true judgment on the whole, you must consider very attentively the great change made by the new plan that I have mentioned; and compare it with the plan of the great alliance, relatively to the general interest of Europe, and the particular interest of your own country. It will not, because it cannot, be denied, that all the ends of the grand alliance might have been obtained by a peace in 1706. I need not recall the events of that, and of the preceding years of the war. Not only the arms of France had been defeated in every army; but the inward state of that kingdom was already more than ever than it had

ever been. She went on indeed, but she staggered and reeled under the burden of the war. Our condition, I speak of Great Britain, was not quite so bad; but the charge of the war increased annually upon us. It was evident that this charge must continue to increase, and it was no less evident that our nation was unable to bear it without falling soon into such distress, and contracting such debts, as we have seen, and felt, and still feel. The Dutch neither restrained their trade, nor overloaded it with taxes. They soon altered the proportion of their quotas, and were deficient even after this alteration in them. But, however, it must be allowed, that they exerted their whole strength; and they and we paid the whole charge of the war. Since, therefore, by such efforts as could not be continued any longer, without oppressing and impoverishing these nations to a degree, that no interest except that of their very being, nor any engagement of assisting an alliance *totis viribus* can require, France was reduced, and all the ends of the war were become attainable; it will be worth your lordship's while to consider why the true use was not made of the success of the confederates against France and Spain, and why a peace was not concluded in the fifth year of the war. When your lordship considers this, you will compare in your thoughts what the state of Europe would have been, and that of your own country might have been, if the plan of the grand alliance had been pursued; with the possible as well as certain, the contingent as well as necessary, consequences of changing this plan in the manner it was changed. You will be of opinion, I think, and it seems to me, after more than twenty years of recollection, re-examination and reflection, that impartial posterity must be of the same opinion; you will be of opinion, I think, that the war was wise and just before the change, because necessary to maintain that equality among the powers of Europe on which the public peace and common prosperity depends; and that it was unwise and unjust after this change, because unnecessary to this end, and directed to other and to contrary ends. You will be guided by undeniable facts to discover through all the false colours which have been laid, and which deceived many at the time, that the war, after this change, became a war of passion, of ambition, of avarice, and of private interest; the private interest of particular persons and particular states; to which the general interest of Europe was sacrificed so entirely, that if the terms insisted on by the confederates had been granted, nay if even those which France was reduced to grant, in 1710, had been accepted, such a new system of power would have been created as might have exposed the balance of this power to deviations, and the peace of Europe to troubles, not inferior to those that the war was designed, when it begun, to prevent. Whilst you observe this in general, you will find particular occasion to lament the fate of Great Britain, in the midst of triumphs that have been sounded so high. She had triumphed indeed to the

year 1706 inclusively; but what were her triumphs afterwards? What was her success after she proceeded on the new plan? I shall say something on that head immediately. Here let me only say, that the glory of taking towns, and winning battles, is to be measured by the utility that results from those victories. Victories that bring honour to the arms, may bring shame to the councils, of a nation. To win a battle, to take a town, is the glory of a general and of an army. Of this glory we had a very large share in the course of the war. But the glory of a nation is to proportion the ends she proposes to her interest and her strength; the means she employs, to the ends she proposes; and the vigour she exerts, to both. Of this glory, I apprehend we have had very little to boast at any time, and particularly in the great conjuncture of which I am speaking. The reasons of ambition, avarice, and private interest, which engaged the princes and states of the confederacy to depart from the principles of the grand alliance, were no reasons for Great Britain. She neither expected nor desired anything more than what she might have obtained by adhering to those principles. What hurried our nation, then, with so much spirit and ardour, into those of the new plan? Your lordship will answer this question to yourself, I believe; by the prejudices and rashness of party; by the influence that the first successes of the confederate arms gave to our ministers; and the popularity that they gave, if I may say so, to the war; by ancient, and fresh resentments, which the unjust and violent usurpations, in short, the whole conduct of Lewis XIV. for forty years together, his haughty treatment of other princes and states, and even the style of his court, had created; and to mention no more, by a notion, groundless but prevalent, that he was and would be master, as long as his grandson was king of Spain; and that there could be no effectual measure taken, though the grand alliance supposed that there might, to prevent a future union of the two monarchies, as long as a prince of the house of Bourbon sat on the Spanish throne. That such a notion should have prevailed, in the first confusion of thoughts which the death and will of Charles II. produced among the generality of men, who saw the fleets and armies of France take possession of all the parts of the Spanish monarchy, is not to be wondered at, by those that consider how ill the generality of mankind are informed, how incapable they are of judging, and yet how ready to pronounce judgment; in fine, how inconsiderately they follow one another in any popular opinion which the heads of party broach, or to which the first appearances of things have given occasion. But, even at this time, the councils of England and Holland did not entertain this notion. They acted on quite another, as might be shown in many instances, if any other besides that of the grand alliance was necessary. When these councils therefore seemed to entertain this notion afterwards, and acted and took engagements to act upon it, we must conclude that they had

other motives. They could not have these; for they knew, that as the Spaniards had been driven by the two treaties of partition to give their monarchy to a prince of the house of Bourbon, so they were driven into the arms of France by the war that we made to force a third upon them. If we acted rightly on the principles of the grand alliance, they acted rightly on those of the will; and if we could not avoid making an offensive war, at the expense of forming and maintaining a vast confederacy, they could not avoid purchasing the protection and assistance of France in a defensive war, and especially in the beginning of it, according to what I have somewhere observed already, by yielding to the authority and admitting the influence of that court in all the affairs of their government. Our ministers knew therefore, that if any inference was to be drawn from the first part of this notion, it was for shortening, not prolonging, the war; for delivering the Spaniards as soon as possible from habits of union and intimacy with France; not for continuing them under the same necessity, till by length of time these habits should be confirmed. As to the latter part of this notion, they knew that it was false and silly. Garth, the best natured ingenious wild man I ever knew, might be in the right, when he said, in some of his poems at that time,

'— An Austrian prince alone
Is fit to nod upon a Spanish throne.'

The setting an Austrian prince upon it, was, no doubt, the surest expedient to prevent a union of the two monarchies of France and Spain; just as setting a prince of the house of Bourbon, on that throne, was the surest expedient to prevent a union of the imperial and Spanish crowns. But it was equally false to say, in either case, that this was the sole expedient. It would be no paradox, but a proposition easily proved, to advance, that if these unions had been effectually provided against, the general interest of Europe would have been little concerned whether Philip or Charles had nodded at Madrid. It would be likewise no paradox to say, that the contingency of uniting France and Spain under the same prince appeared more remote, about the middle of the last great war, when the dethronement of Philip in favour of Charles was made a condition of peace sine qua non than the contingency of a union of the imperial and Spanish crowns. Nay, I know not whether it would be a paradox to affirm, that the expedient that was taken, and that was always obvious to be taken, of excluding Philip and his race from the succession of France, by creating an interest in all the other princes of the blood, and by consequence a party in France itself for their exclusion, whenever the case should happen, was not in its nature more effectual than any that could have been taken; and some must have been taken, not only to exclude

Charles from the empire whenever the case should happen that happened soon, the death of his brother Joseph without issue male, but his posterity likewise in all future vacancies of the imperial throne. The expedient that was taken against Philip at the treaty of Utrecht, they who opposed the peace attempted to ridicule; but some of them have had occasion since that time to see, though the case has not happened, how effectual it would have been if it had; and he who should go about to ridicule it after our experience, would only make himself ridiculous. Notwithstanding all this, he who transports himself back to that time must acknowledge that the confederated powers in general could not but be of Garth's mind, and think it more agreeable to the common interest of Europe, that a branch of Austria, than a branch of Bourbon, should gather the Spanish succession, and that the maritime powers, as they are called impertinently enough, with respect to the superiority of Great Britain, might think it was for their particular interest to have a prince, dependent for some time at least on them, King of Spain, rather than a prince whose dependence, as long as he stood in any, must be naturally on France. I do not say, as some have done, a prince whose family was an old ally, rather than a prince whose family was an old enemy; because I lay no weight on the gratitude of princes, and am as much persuaded that an Austrian king of Spain would have made us returns of that sort in no other proportion than of his want of us, as I am that Philip and his race will make no other returns of the same sort to France. If this affair had been entire therefore, on the death of the King of Spain; if we had made no partition, nor he any will, the whole monarchy of Spain would have been the prize to be fought for; and our wishes, and such efforts as we were able to make, in the most unprovided condition imaginable, must have been on the side of Austria. But it was far from being entire. A prince of the house of Austria might have been on the spot, before the King of Spain died, to gather his succession; but instead of this a prince of the house of Bourbon was there soon afterwards, and took possession of the whole monarchy to which he had been called by the late king's will, and by the voice of the Spanish nation. The councils of England and Holland therefore preferred very wisely, by their engagements in the grand alliance, what was more practicable though less eligible, to what they deemed more eligible, but saw become by the course of events, if not absolutely impracticable, yet an enterprise of more length, more difficulty, and greater expense of blood and treasure, than these nations were able to bear; or than they ought to bear, when their security and that of the rest of Europe might be sufficiently provided for at a cheaper rate. If the confederates could not obtain, by the force of their arms, the ends of the war, laid down in the grand alliance, to what purpose would it be to stipulate for more? And if they were able to obtain these, it

was evident that, whilst they dismembered the Spanish monarchy, they must reduce the power of France. This happened ; the Low Countries were conquered ; the French were driven out of Germany and Italy ; and Lewis XIV., who had so long and so lately set mankind at defiance, was reduced to sue for peace.

If it had been granted him in 1706, on what foot must it have been granted ? The allies had already in their power all the states that were to compose the reasonable satisfaction for the emperor. I say in their power, because, though Naples and Sicily were not actually reduced at that time, yet the expulsion of the French out of Italy, and the disposition of the people of those kingdoms considered, it was plain the allies might reduce them when they pleased. The confederate arms were superior till then in Spain, and several provinces acknowledged Charles III. If the rest had been yielded to him by the treaty, all that the new plan required had been obtained. If the French would not yet have abandoned Philip, as we had found that the Castilians would not even when our army was at Madrid, all that the old plan, the plan of the grand alliance required, had been obtained ; but still France and Spain had given nothing to purchase a peace, and they were in circumstances not to expect it without purchasing it. They would have purchased it, my lord ; and France as well as Spain would have contributed a larger share of the price, rather than continue the war in her exhausted state. Such a treaty of peace would have been a third treaty of partition indeed, but vastly preferable to the two former. The great objection to the two former was drawn from that considerable increase of dominion, which the crown of France, and not a branch of the house of Bourbon, acquired by them. I know what may be said speciously enough to persuade that such an increase of dominion would not have augmented, but would rather have weakened the power of France, and what examples may be drawn from history to countenance such an opinion. I know, likewise, that the compact figure of France, and the contiguity of all her provinces, make a very essential part of the force of her monarchy. Had the designs of Charles VIII., Lewis XII., Francis I., and Henry II. succeeded, the dominions of France would have been more extensive, and I believe the strength of her monarchy would have been less. I have sometimes thought that even the loss of the battle of St. Quentin, which obliged Henry II. to recall the Duke of Guise with his army out of Italy, was, in this respect, no unhappy event. But the reasoning, which is good, I think, when applied to those times, will not hold when applied to ours, and to the case I consider here ; the state of France, the state of her neighbours, and the whole constitution of Europe being so extremely different. The objection, therefore, to the two treaties of partition had a real weight. The power of France, deemed already exorbitant, would have been increased by this accession of dominion

in the hands of Lewis XIV.; and the use he intended to make of it by keeping Italy and Spain in awe, appears in the article that gave him the ports on the Tuscan coast and the province of Guipuscoa. This King William might, and I question not did, see; but that prince might think, too, that for this very reason Lewis XIV. would adhere, in all events, to the treaty of partition; and that these consequences were more remote, and would be less dangerous than those of making no partition at all. The partition, even the worst that might have been made by a treaty of peace in 1706, would have been the very reverse of this. France would have been weakened, and her enemies strengthened, by her concessions on the side of the Low Countries, of Germany, and Savoy. If a prince of her royal family had remained in possession of Spain and the West Indies, no advantage would have accrued to her by it, and effectual bars would have been opposed to a union of the two monarchies. The house of Austria would have had a reasonable satisfaction for that shadow of right which a former partition gave her. She had no other after the will of Charles II.; and this may be justly termed a shadow, since England, Holland, and France could confer no real right to the Spanish succession, nor to any part of it. She had declined acceding to that partition before France departed from it, and would have preferred the Italian provinces, without Spain and the West Indies, to Spain and the West Indies without the Italian provinces. The Italian provinces would have fallen to her share by this partition. The particular demands of England and Holland would have suffered no difficulty, and those that we were obliged by treaty to make for others would have been easy to adjust. Would not this have been enough, my lord, for the public security, for the common interest, and for the glory of our arms? To have humbled and reduced in five campaigns a power that had disturbed and insulted Europe almost forty years; to have restored in so short a time the balance of power in Europe to a sufficient point of equality, after it had been more than fifty years, that is, from the treaty of Westphalia, in a gradual deviation from this point; in short, to have retrieved in 1706, a game that was become desperate at the beginning of the century. To have done all this, before the war had exhausted our strength, was the utmost sure that any man could desire who intended the public good alone; and no honest reason ever was, nor ever will be given, why the war was protracted any longer? why we neither made peace after a short, vigorous, and successful war, nor put it entirely out of the power of France to continue at any rate a long one? I have said, and it is true, that this had been entirely out of her power, if we had given greater interruption to the commerce of Old and New Spain, and if we had hindered France from importing annually, from the year 1702, such immense treasures as she did import by the ships she sent, with the permission of Spain, to the South Sea. It has been advanced, and it

is a common opinion, that we were restrained by the jealousy of the Dutch from making use of the liberty given by treaty to them and us, and which, without his imperial majesty's leave, since we entered into the war, we might have taken, of making conquests in the Spanish West Indies. Be it so. But to go to the South Seas, to trade there if we could, to pillage the West Indies without making conquests if we could not, and whether we traded or whether we pillaged to hinder the French from trading there, was a measure that would have given, one ought to think, no jealousy to the Dutch, who might, and it is to be supposed would, have taken their part in these expeditions; or if it had given them jealousy, what could they have replied when a British minister had told them, 'That it little became them to find fault that 'we traded with or pillaged the Spaniards in the West Indies to the 'detriment of our common enemy, whilst we connived at them who 'traded with this enemy to his and their great advantage, against our 'remonstrances, and in violation of the condition upon which we had 'given the first augmentation of our forces in the Low Countries'? We might have pursued this measure, notwithstanding any engagement that we took by the treaty with Portugal, if I remember that treaty right; but instead of this, we wasted our forces, and squandered millions after millions in supporting our alliance with this crown, and in pursuing the chimerical project which was made the object of this alliance. I call it chimerical, because it was equally so to expect a revolution in favour of Charles III. on the slender authority of such a trifler as the Admiral of Castile; and when this failed us, to hope to conquer Spain by the assistance of the Portuguese and the revolt of the Catalans. Yet this was the foundation upon which the new plan of the war was built, and many ruinous engagements were taken.

The particular motives of private men, as well as of princes and states, to protract the war, are partly known, and partly guessed, at this time. But whenever that time comes, and I am persuaded it will come, when their secret motives, their secret designs and intrigues, can be laid open, I presume to say to your lordship that the most confused scene of iniquity and folly that it is possible to imagine will appear. In the mean while, if your lordship considers only the treaty of barrier, as my Lord Townshend signed it, without, nay in truth, against orders; for the Duke of Marlborough, though joint plenipotentiary, did not: if you consider the famous preliminaries of 1709, which we made a mock show of ratifying, though we knew that they would not be accepted; for so the Marquis of Torcy had told the pensionary before he left the Hague, as the said marquis has assured me very often since that time: if you inquire into the anecdotes of Gertruydenberg, and if you consult other authentic papers that are extant, your lordship will see the policy of the new plan, I think, in this light. Though we had refused, before the war began, to enter into engage-

ments for the conquest of Spain, yet as soon as it began, when the reason of things was still the same, for the success of our first campaign cannot be said to have altered it, we entered into these very engagements. By the treaty wherein we took these engagements first, Portugal was brought into the grand alliance; that is, she consented to employ her formidable forces against Philip, at the expense of England and Holland; provided we would debar ourselves from making any acquisitions, and the house of Austria promise, that she should acquire many important places in Spain, and an immense extent of country in America. By such bargains as this, the whole confederacy was formed, and held together. Such means were indeed effectual to multiply enemies to France and Spain; but a project so extensive and so difficult as to make many bargains of this kind necessary, and necessary for a great number of years, and for a very uncertain event, was a project into which, for this very reason, England and Holland should not have entered. It is worthy your observation, my lord, that these bad bargains would not have been continued, as they were almost to our immediate ruin, if the war had not been protracted under the pretended necessity of reducing the whole Spanish monarchy to the obedience of the house of Austria. Now, as no other confederate except Portugal was to receive his recompense by any dismemberment of dominions in Old or New Spain, the engagements we took to conquer this whole monarchy had no visible necessary cause, but the procuring the accession of this power, that was already neuter, to the grand alliance. This accession, as I have said before, served only to make us neglect immediate and certain advantages, for remote and uncertain hopes; and choose to attempt the conquest of the Spanish nation at our own vast expense, whom we might have starved, and by starving, reduced both the French and them, at their expense.

I called the necessity of reducing the whole Spanish monarchy to the obedience of the house of Austria, a pretended necessity: and pretended it was, not real, without doubt. But I am apt to think your lordship may go further, and find some reason to suspect, that the opinion itself of this necessity was not very real in the minds of those who urged it; in the minds I would say of the able men among them; for that it was real in some of our zealous British politicians, I do them the justice to believe. Your lordship may find reasons to suspect perhaps, that this opinion was set up rather to occasion a diversion of the forces of France, and to furnish pretences for prolonging the war for other ends.

Before the year 1710, the war was kept alive with alternate success in Spain; and it may be said therefore, that the design of conquering this kingdom continued, as well as the hopes of succeeding. But why then did the States General refuse, in 1709, to admit an article in the

barrier treaty, by which they would have obliged themselves to procure the whole Spanish monarchy to the house of Austria, when that zealous politician my lord Townshend pressed them to it? If their opinion of the necessity of carrying on the war till this point could be obtained was real, why did they risk the immense advantages given them with so much profuse generosity by this treaty, rather than consent to an engagement that was so conformable to their opinion?

After the year 1710, it will not be said, I presume, that the war could be supported in Spain with any prospect of advantage on our side. We had sufficiently experienced how little dependence could be had on the vigour of the Portuguese; and how firmly the Spanish nation in general, the Castilians in particular, were attached to Philip. Our armies had been twice at Madrid, this prince had been twice driven from his capital, his rival had been there, none stirred in favour of the victorious, all wished and acted for the vanquished. In short, the falsehood of all those lures, by which we had been enticed to make war in Spain, had appeared sufficiently in 1706; but was so grossly evident in 1710, that Mr. Craggs, who was sent towards the end of that year by Mr. Stanhope into England, on commissions that he executed with much good sense and much address, owned to me: that in Mr. Stanhope's opinion, and he was not apt to despond of success, especially in the execution of his own projects, nothing could be done more in Spain, the general attachment of the people to Philip, and their aversion to Charles considered; that armies of twenty or thirty thousand men might walk about that country till doom's-day, so he expressed himself, without effect; that wherever they came, the people would submit to Charles III. out of terror, and as soon as they were gone, proclaim Philip V. again out of affection; that to conquer Spain required a great army; and to keep it, a greater.

Was it possible, after this, to think in good earnest of conquering Spain, and could they be in good earnest who continued to hold the same language, and to insist on the same measures? Could they be so in the following year, when the Emperor Joseph died? Charles was become then the sole surviving male of the house of Austria, and succeeded to the empire as well as to all the hereditary dominions of that family. Could they be in earnest, who maintained even in this conjuncture, that 'no peace could be safe, honourable, or lasting, so long as the kingdom of Spain and the West Indies remained in the possession of any branch of the house of Bourbon?' Did they mean that Charles should be emperor and King of Spain? In this project they would have had the allies against them. Did they mean to call the Duke of Savoy to the crown of Spain, or to bestow it on some other prince? In this project they would have had his imperial majesty against them. In either case the confederacy would have been broken: and how then would they have continued the war? Did they mean

nothing, or did they mean something more than they owned, something more than to reduce the exorbitant power of France, and to force the whole Spanish monarchy out of the house of Bourbon?

Both these ends might have been obtained at Gertruydenberg: why were they not obtained? Read the preliminaries of 1709, which were made the foundation of this treaty. Inform yourself of what passed there, and observe what followed. Your lordship will remain astonished. I remain so every time I reflect upon them, though I saw these things at no very great distance, even whilst they were in transaction; and though I know most certainly that France lost two years before, by the little skill and address of her principal minister (Chamillard.), in answering overtures made during the siege of Lisle, by a principal person among the allies, such an opportunity, and such a correspondence, as would have removed some of the obstacles that lay now in her way, have prevented others, and have procured her peace. An equivalent for the thirty-seventh article of the preliminaries, that is, for the cession of Spain and the West Indies, was the point to be discussed at Gertruydenberg. Naples and Sicily, or even Naples and Sardinia would have contented the French, at least they would have accepted them as the equivalent. Buys and Vanderdussen, who treated with them, reported this to the ministers of the allies; and it was upon this occasion that the Duke of Marlborough, as Buys himself told me, took immediately the lead, and congratulated the assembly on the near approach of a peace; said, that since the French were in this disposition, it was time to consider what further demands should be made upon them, according to the liberty reserved in the preliminaries; and exhorted all the ministers of the allies to adjust their several ulterior pretensions, and to prepare their demands.

This proceeding, and what followed, put me in mind of that of the Romans with the Carthaginians. The former were resolved to consent to no peace till Carthage was laid in ruins. They set a treaty however on foot at the request of their old enemy, imposed some terms, and referred them to their generals for the rest. Their generals pursued the same method, and by reserving still a right of making ulterior demands, they reduced the Carthaginians at last to the necessity of abandoning their city, or of continuing the war after they had given up their arms, their machines, and their fleet, in hopes of peace.

France saw the snare and resolved to run any risk rather than to be caught in it. We continued to demand under pressure of war, the cession of Spain and the West Indies, that Lewis XIV. should take on him to deprive his grandson in the space of two years, and if he did not effect it in that time, that we should be at liberty to "end the war without restoring the places that were to be put into our hands according to the preliminaries, which were the most important places France possessed on the side of the Low Countries. Lewis offered to

abandon his grandson, and, if he could not prevail on him to resign, to furnish money to the allies, who might at the expense of France force him to evacuate Spain. The proposition made by the allies had an air of inhumanity; and the rest of mankind might be shocked to see the grandfather obliged to make war on his grandson. But Lewis XIV. had treated mankind with too much inhumanity in his prosperous days, to have any reason to complain even of this proposition. His people indeed, who are apt to have great partiality for their kings, might pity his distress. This happened, and he found his account in it. Philip must have evacuated Spain, I think, notwithstanding his own obstinacy, the spirit of his queen, and the resolute attachment of the Spaniards, if his grandfather had insisted and been in earnest to force him: but if this expedient was, as it was, odious, why did we prefer to continue the war against France and Spain, rather than accept the other? Why did we neglect the opportunity of reducing, effectually and immediately, the exorbitant power of France, and of rendering the conquest of Spain practicable? Both which might have been brought about, and consequently the avowed ends of the war might have been answered, by accepting the expedient that France offered. ‘France, it was said, was not sincere: she meant nothing ‘more than to amuse and divide.’ This reason was given at the time; but some of those who gave it then, I have seen ashamed to insist on it since. France was not in condition to act the part she had acted in former treaties; and her distress was no bad pledge of her sincerity on this occasion. But there was a better still. The strong places that she must have put into the hands of the allies would have exposed her, on the least breach of faith, to see, not her frontier alone, but even the provinces that lie behind it desolated; and Prince Eugene might have had the satisfaction it is said, I know not how truly, he desired, of marching with the torch in his hand to Versailles.

Your lordship will observe, that the conferences at Gertruydenberg ending in the manner they did, the inflexibility of the allies gave new life and spirit to the French and Spanish nations, distressed and exhausted as they were. The troops of the former withdrawn out of Spain, and the Spaniards left to defend themselves as they could, the Spaniards alone obliged us to retreat from Madrid, and defeated us in our retreat. But your lordship may think perhaps, as I do, that if Lewis XIV. had bound himself by a solemn treaty to abandon his grandson, had paid a subsidy to dethrone him, and had consented to acknowledge another King of Spain, the Spaniards would not have exerted the same zeal for Philip; the actions of Almenara and Saragossa might have been decisive, and those of Brihuega and Villa Vicosa would not have happened. After all these events, how could any reasonable man expect that a war should be supported with advantage in Spain, to which the court of Vienna had contributed nothing from

the first, scarce bread to their archduke; which Portugal waged faintly and with deficient quotas, and which the Dutch had in a manner renounced, by neglecting to recruit their forces? How was Charles to be placed on the Spanish throne, or Philip at least to be driven out of it? By the success of the confederate arms in other parts? But what success sufficient to this purpose, could we expect? This question may be answered best by showing what success we had.

Portugal and Savoy did nothing before the death of the Emperor Joseph; and declared in form, as soon as he was dead, that they would carry on the war no longer to set the crown of Spain on the head of Charles, since this would be to fight against the very principle they had fought for. The Rhine was a scene of inaction. The sole efforts that were to bring about the great event of dethroning Philip, were those which the Duke of Marlborough was able to make. He took three towns in 1710, Aire, Bethune, and St. Venant: and one, Bouchain, in 1711. Now this conquest being in fact the only one the confederates made that year, Bouchain may be said properly and truly to have cost our nation very near 7,000,000*l.*; for your lordship will find, I believe, that the charge of the war for that year amounted to no less. It is true that the Duke of Marlborough had proposed a very great project, by which incursions would have been made during the winter into France; the next campaign might have been opened early on our side, and several other great and obvious advantages might have been obtained; but the Dutch refused to contribute, even less than their proportion, for the queen had offered to take the deficiency on herself, to the expense of barracks and forage; and disappointed by their obstinacy the whole design of the confederacy.

We were then amused with visionary schemes of marching our whole army, in a year or two more, and after a town or two more were taken, directly to Paris, or at least into the heart of France. But was this so easy or so sure a game? The French expected we would play it. Their generals had visited the several posts they might take, when our army should enter France, to retard, to incommodate, to distress us in our march, and even to make a decisive stand and to give us battle. I take what I say here from indisputable authority, that of the persons consulted and employed in preparing for this great distress. Had we been beaten, or had we been forced to retire towards our own frontier in the Low Countries, after penetrating into France, the hopes on which we protracted the war would have been disappointed, and I think the most sanguine would have then repented refusing the offers made at Gertruydenberg. But if we had beaten the French, for it was scarce lawful in those days of our presumption to suppose the contrary, would the whole monarchy of Spain have been our immediate and certain prize? Suppose, and I suppose it on good grounds, my lord, that the French had resolved to defend their country inch by inch, and that

Lewis XIV. had determined to retire with his court to Lyons or elsewhere, and to defend the passage of the Loire, when he could no longer defend that of the Seine, rather than submit to the terms imposed on him: what should we have done in this case? Must we not have accepted such a peace as we had refused; or have protracted the war till we had conquered France first, in order to conquer Spain afterwards? Did we hope for revolutions in France? We had hoped for them in Spain; and we should have been bubbles of our hopes in both. That there was a spirit raised against the government of Lewis XIV. in his court, nay in his family, and that strange schemes of private ambition were formed and forming there, I cannot doubt; and some effects of this spirit produced perhaps the greatest mortifications that he suffered in the latter part of his reign.

A light instance of this spirit is all I will quote at this time. I supped in the year 1715, at a house in France, where two persons (the Dukes de la Feuillade and Mortemar) of no small figure, who had been in great company that night, arrived very late. The conversation turned on the events of the precedent war, and the negotiations of the late peace. In the process of the conversation, one of them (La Feuillade) broke loose, and said, directing his discourse to me, ‘Vous auriez pu ‘nous écraser dans ce temps-là: pourquoi ne l’avez vous pas fait?’ I answered him coolly, ‘Par ce que dans ce temps-là, nous n’avons plus ‘craint votre puissance.’ This anecdote, too trivial for history, may find its place in a letter, and may serve to confirm what I have admitted, that there were persons even in France, who expected to find their private account in the distress of their country. But these persons were a few, men of wild imaginations and strong passions, more enterprising than capable, and of more name than credit. In general, the endeavours of Lewis XIV., and the sacrifices he offered to make in order to obtain a peace, had attached his people more than ever to him; and if Lewis had determined to go farther than he had offered at Gertruydenberg, in abandoning his grandson, the French nation would not have abandoned him.

But to resume what I have said or hinted already, the necessary consequences of protracting the war in order to dethrone Philip, from the year 1711, inclusively, could be no other than these; our design of penetrating into France might have been defeated, and have become fatal to us by a reverse of fortune; our first success might not have obliged the French to submit; and we might have had France to conquer, after we had failed in our first attempt to conquer Spain, and even in order to proceed to a second; the French might have submitted, and the Spaniards not; and whilst the former had been employed to force the latter, according to the scheme of the allies; or whilst the latter submitting likewise, Philip had evacuated Spain, the high allies might have gone together by the ears about dividing the spoil, and disposing

of the crown of Spain. To these issues were things brought by protracting the war; by refusing to make peace, on the principles of the grand alliance at worst, in 1706; and by refusing to grant it, even on those of the new plan, in 1710. Such contingent events as I have mentioned stood in prospect before us. The end of the war was removed out of sight; and they who clamoured rather than argued for the continuation of it, contented themselves to affirm that France was not enough reduced, and that no peace ought to be made as long as a prince of the house of Bourbon remained on the Spanish throne. When they would think France enough reduced, it was impossible to guess. Whether they intended to join the imperial and Spanish crowns on the head of Charles, who had declared his irrevocable resolution to continue the war till the conditions insisted upon at Gertruydenberg were obtained? whether they intended to bestow Spain and the Indies on some other prince? and how this great alteration in their own plan should be effected by common consent? how possession should be given to Charles or to any other prince, not only of Spain but of all the Spanish dominions out of Europe; where the attachment to Philip was at least as strong as in Castile, and where it would not be so easy, the distance and extent of these dominions considered, to oblige the Spaniards to submit to another government? These points, and many more equally necessary to be determined, and equally difficult to prepare, were neither determined nor prepared; so that we were reduced to carry on the war, after the death of the Emperor Joseph, without any positive scheme agreed to as the scheme of the future peace by the allies. That of the grand alliance, we had long before renounced. That of the new plan was become ineligible; and if it had been eligible, it would have been impracticable, because of the division it would have created among the allies themselves; several of whom would not have consented, notwithstanding his irrevocable resolution, that the emperor should be king of Spain. I know not what part the protractors of the war, in the depth of their policy, intended to take. Our nation had contributed, and acted so long under the direction of their councils, for the grandeur of the house of Austria, like one of the hereditary kingdoms usurped by that family, that it is lawful to think their intention might be to unite the imperial and Spanish crowns. But I rather think they had no very determinate view, beyond that of continuing the war as long as they could. The late Lord Oxford told me, that my Lord Somers being pressed, I know not on what occasion nor by whom, on the unnecessary and ruinous continuation of the war; instead of giving reasons to show the necessity of it, contented himself to reply, that he had been bred up in a hatred of France. This was a strange reply for a wise man: and yet I know not whether he could have given a better then, or whether any of his pupils could give a better now.

The whig party in general acquired great and just popularity, in the

reign of our Charles II., by the clamour they raised against the conduct of that prince in foreign affairs. They who succeeded to the name rather than the principles of this party, after the revolution, and who have had the administration of the government in their hands with very little interruption ever since, pretending to act on the same principle, have run into an extreme as vicious and as contrary to all the rules of good policy, as that which their predecessors exclaimed against. The old whigs complained of the inglorious figure we made, whilst our court was the bubble, and our king the pensioner of France; and insisted that the growing ambition and power of Lewis XIV. should be opposed in time. The modern whigs boasted and still boast, of the glorious figure we made, whilst we reduced ourselves, by their councils, and under their administrations, to be the bubbles of our pensioners, that is of our allies; and whilst we measured our efforts in war, and the continuation of them, without any regard to the interests and abilities of our own country; without a just and sober regard, such a one as contemplates objects in their true light, and sees them in their true magnitude, to the general system of power in Europe; and, in short, with a principal regard merely to particular interests at home and abroad. I say at home and abroad, because it is not less true, that they have sacrificed the wealth of their country to the forming and maintaining a party at home, than that they have done so to the forming and maintaining, beyond all pretences of necessity, alliances abroad. These general assertions may be easily justified without having recourse to private anecdotes, as your lordship will find when you consider the whole series of our conduct in the two wars; in that which preceded, and that which succeeded immediately the beginning of the present century, but above all in the last of them. In the administrations that preceded the revolution, trade had flourished, and our nation had grown opulent; but the general interest of Europe had been too much neglected by us; and slavery, under the umbrage of prerogative, had been well-nigh established among us. In those that have followed, taxes upon taxes, and debts upon debts, have been perpetually accumulated, till a small number of families have grown into immense wealth, and national beggary has been brought upon us; under the specious pretences of supporting a common cause against France, reducing her exorbitant power, and poising that of Europe more equally in the public balance; laudable designs, no doubt, as far as they were real, but such as, being converted into mere pretences, have been productive of much evil; some of which we feel and have long felt, and some will extend its consequences to our latest posterity. The reign of prerogative was short; and the evils and the dangers, to which we were exposed by it, ended with it. But the reign of false and squandering policy has lasted long, it lasts still, and will finally complete our ruin. Beggary has been the consequence of slavery in some countries; slavery will be probably

the consequence of beggary in ours; and if it is so, we know at whose door to lay it. If we had finished the war in 1706, we should have reconciled, like a wise people, our foreign and our domestic interests as nearly as possible; we should have secured the former sufficiently, and not have sacrificed the latter as entirely as we did by the prosecution of the war afterwards. You will not be able to see without astonishment, how the charge of the war increased yearly upon us from the beginning of it; nor how immense a sum we paid in the course of it to supply the deficiencies of our confederates. Your astonishment and indignation too, will increase, when you come to compare the progress that was made from the year 1706 exclusively, with the expense of more than 30,000,000 (I do not exaggerate, though I write upon memory) that this progress cost us, to the year 1711 inclusively. Upon this view, your lordship will be persuaded that it was high time to take the resolution of making peace, when the queen thought fit to change her ministry towards the end of the year 1710. It was high time indeed to save our country from absolute insolvency and bankruptcy, by putting an end to a scheme of conduct, which the prejudices of a party, the whimsy of some particular men, the private interest of more, and the ambition and avarice of our allies, who had been invited as it were to a scramble by the preliminaries of 1709, alone maintained. The persons, therefore, who came into power at this time, hearkened, and they did well to hearken, to the first overtures that were made them. The disposition of their enemies invited them to do so, but that of their friends, and that of a party at home who had nursed and been nursed by the war, might have deterred them from it; for the difficulties and dangers, to which they must be exposed in carrying forward this great work, could escape none of them. In a letter to a friend, it may be allowed me to say, that they did not escape me; and that I foresaw, as contingent but not improbable events, a good part of what has happened to me since. Though it was a duty therefore that we owed to our country, to deliver her from the necessity of bearing any longer so unequal a part in so unnecessary a war, yet was there some degree of merit in performing it. I think so strongly in this matter, I am so incorrigible, my lord, that if I could be placed in the same circumstances again, I would take the same resolution, and act the same part. Age and experience might enable me to act with more ability and greater skill; but all I have suffered since the death of the queen should not hinder me from acting. Notwithstanding this, I shall not be surprised if you think that the peace of Utrecht was not answerable to the success of the war, nor to the efforts made in it. I think so myself, and have always owned, even when it was making and made, that I thought so. Since we had committed a successful folly, we ought to have reaped more advantage from it than we did; and whether we had left Philip, or placed another prince on the throne of Spain, we ought

to have reduced the power of France, and to have strengthened her neighbours, much more than we did. We ought to have reduced her power for generations to come, and not to have contented ourselves with a momentary reduction of it. France was exhausted to a great degree of men and money, and her government had no credit; but they, who took this for a sufficient reduction of her power, looked but a little way before them, and reasoned too superficially. Several such there were however; for as it has been said that there is no extravagancy which some philosopher or other has not maintained, so your experience, young as you are, must have shown you, that there is no absurd extreme, into which our party-politicians of Great Britain are not prone to fall, concerning the state and conduct of public affairs. But if France was exhausted, so were we, and so were the Dutch. Famine rendered her condition much more miserable than ours, at one time, in appearance and in reality too. But as soon as this accident, that had distressed the French and frightened Lewis XIV. to the utmost degree, and the immediate consequences of it were over; it was obvious to observe, though few made the observation, that whilst we were unable to raise in a year, by some millions at least, the expenses of the year, the French were willing and able to bear the imposition of the tenth, over and above all the other taxes that had been laid upon them. This observation had the weight it deserved; and surely it deserved to have some among those who made it, at the time spoken of, and who did not think that the war was to be continued as long as a parliament could be prevailed on to vote money. But supposing it to have deserved none, supposing the power of France to have been reduced as low as you please, with respect to her inward state; yet still I affirm, that such a reduction could not be permanent, and was not therefore sufficient. Whoever knows the nature of her government, the temper of her people, and the natural advantages she has in commerce over all the nations that surround her, knows that an arbitrary government, and the temper of her people enable her on particular occasions to throw off a load of debt much more easily, and with consequences much less to be feared, than any of her neighbours can; that although in the general course of things, trade be cramped and industry vexed by this arbitrary government, yet neither one nor the other is oppressed; and the temper of the people, and the natural advantages of the country, are such, that how great soever her distress be at any point of time, twenty years of tranquillity suffice to re-establish her affairs, and to enrich her again at the expense of all the nations of Europe. If any one doubts of this, let him consider the condition in which this kingdom was left by Lewis XIV.; the strange pranks the late Duke of Orleans played, during his regency and administration, with the whole system of public revenue and private property; and then let him tell himself, that the revenues of France, the tenth taken off, exceed all the

expenses of her government by many millions of livres already, and will exceed them by many more in another year.

Upon the whole matter, my lord, the low and exhausted state to which France was reduced by the last great war, was but a momentary reduction of her power ; and whatever real and more lasting reduction the treaty of Utrecht brought about in some instances, it was not sufficient. The power of France would not have appeared as great as it did, when England and Holland armed themselves and armed all Germany against her, if she had lain as open to the invasions of her enemies, as her enemies lay to hers. Her inward strength was great ; but the strength of those frontiers which Lewis XIV. was almost forty years in forming, and which the folly of all his neighbours in their turns suffered him to form, made this strength as formidable as it became. The true reduction of the exorbitant power of France, I take no notice of chimerical projects about changing her government, consisted therefore in disarming her frontiers, and fortifying the barriers against her by the cession and demolition of many more places than she yielded up at Utrecht ; but not of more than she might have been obliged to sacrifice to her own immediate relief, and to the future security of her neighbours. That she was not obliged to make these sacrifices, I affirm was owing solely to those who opposed the peace ; and I am willing to put my whole credit with your lordship, and the whole merits of a cause that has been so much contested, on this issue. I say a cause that has been so much contested ; for in truth I think it is no longer a doubt anywhere, except in British pamphlets, whether the conduct of those who neither declined treating, as was done in 1706 ; nor pretended to treat without a design of concluding, as was done in 1709-10, but carried the great work of the peace forward to its consummation ; or the conduct of those who opposed this work in every step of its progress, saved the power of France from a greater and a sufficient reduction at the treaty of Utrecht ? The very ministers, who were employed in this fatal opposition, are obliged to confess this truth. How should they deny it ? Those of Vienna may complain that the emperor had not the entire Spanish monarchy, or those of Holland that the States were not made masters directly and indirectly of the whole Low Countries. But neither they, nor any one else that has any sense of shame about him, can deny that the late queen, though she was resolved to treat because she was resolved to finish the war, yet was to the utmost degree desirous to treat in a perfect union with her allies, and to procure them all the reasonable terms they could expect ; and much better than those they reduced themselves to the necessity of accepting, by endeavouring to wrest the negotiation out of her hands. The disunion of the allies gave France the advantages she improved. The sole question is, who caused this disunion ? and that will be easily decided by every impartial

man, who informs himself carefully of the public anecdotes of that time. If the private anecdotes were to be laid open as well as those, and I think it almost time they should, the whole monstrous scene would appear, and shock the eye of every honest man. I do not intend to descend into many particulars at this time ; but whenever I, or any other person as well informed as I, shall descend into a full deduction of such particulars, it will become undeniably evident, that the most violent opposition imaginable, carried on by the Germans and the Dutch in league with a party in Britain, began as soon as the first overtures were made to the queen, before she had so much as begun to treat ; and was therefore an opposition, not to this or that plan of treaty, but in truth to all treaty ; and especially to one wherein Great Britain took the lead, or was to have any particular advantage. That the imperialists meant no treaty, unless a preliminary and impracticable condition of it was to set the crown of Spain on the emperor's head, will appear from this ; that Prince Eugene, when he came into England, long after the death of Joseph and elevation of Charles, upon an errand most unworthy of so great a man, treated always on this supposition : and I remember with how much inward impatience I assisted at conferences held with him concerning quotas for renewing the war in Spain, in the very same room, at the Cockpit, where the queen's ministers had been told in plain terms, a little before, by those of other allies, 'that their masters would not consent that the 'imperial and Spanish crowns should unite on the same head.' That the Dutch were not averse to all treaty, but meant none wherein Great Britain was to have any particular advantage, will appear from this ; that their minister declared himself ready and authorized to stop the opposition made to the queen's measures, by presenting a memorial, wherein he would declare, 'that his masters entered into them, and 'were resolved not to continue the war for the recovery of Spain, 'provided the queen would consent that they should garrison Gibraltar 'and Portmahon jointly with us, and share equally the *Assiento*, 'the South Sea ship, and whatever should be granted by the Spaniards 'to the queen and her subjects.' That the whigs engaged in this league with foreign powers against their country, as well as their queen, and with a frenzy more unaccountable than that which made and maintained the solemn league and covenant formerly, will appear from this ; that their attempts were directed, not only to wrest the negotiations out of the queen's hands, but to oblige their country to carry on the war, on the same unequal foot that had cost her already about twenty millions more than she ought to have contributed to it. For they not only continued to abet the emperor, whose inability to supply his quota was confessed ; but the Dutch likewise, after the States had refused to ratify the treaty their minister signed at London towards the end of the year 1711, and by which the queen united

herself more closely than ever to them ; engaging to pursue the war, to conclude the peace, and to guarantee it when concluded, jointly with them ; ‘ provided they would keep the engagements they had ‘ taken with her, and the conditions of proportionate expense under ‘ which our nation had entered into the war.’ Upon such schemes as these was the opposition to the treaty of Utrecht carried on ; and the means employed, and the means projected to be employed, were worthy of such schemes ; open, direct, and indecent defiance of legal authority, secret conspiracies against the state, and base machinations against particular men, who had no other crime than that of endeavouring to conclude a war, under the authority of the queen, which a party in the nation endeavoured to prolong, against her authority. Had the good policy of concluding the war been doubtful, it was certainly as lawful for those who thought it good to advise it, as it had been for those who thought it bad to advise the contrary ; and the decision of the sovereign on the throne ought to have terminated the contest. But he who had judged by the appearances of things on one side, at that time, would have been apt to think, that putting an end to the war, or to Magna Charta, was the same thing ; that the queen on the throne had no right to govern independently of her successor ; nor any of her subjects a right to administer the government under her, though called to it by her, except those whom she had thought fit to lay aside. Extravagant as these principles are, no other could justify the conduct held at that time by those who opposed the peace ; and as I said just now, that the frenzy of this league was more unaccountable than that of the solemn league and covenant, I might have added, that it was not very many degrees less criminal. Some of those, who charged the queen’s ministers, after her death, with imaginary treasons, had been guilty during her life of real treasons ; and I can compare the folly and violence of the spirit that prevailed at that time, both before the conclusion of the peace and under pretence of danger to the succession after it, to nothing more nearly than to the folly and violence of the spirit that seized the tories soon after the accession of George I. The latter indeed, which was provoked by unjust and impolitic persecution, broke out in open rebellion. The former might have done so, if the queen had lived a little longer. But to return.

The obstinate adherence of the Dutch to this league, in opposition to the queen, rendered the conferences of Utrecht, when they were opened, no better than mock conferences. Had the men who governed that commonwealth been wise and honest enough to unite, at least then, cordially with the queen, and since they could not hinder a congress, to act in concert with her in it, we should have been still in time to maintain a sufficient union among the allies, and a sufficient superiority over the French. All the specific demands that the former made, as well as the Dutch themselves, either to encumber the negotia-

tion, or to have in reserve, according to the artifice usually employed on such occasions, certain points from which to depart in the course of it with advantage, would not have been obtained; but all the essential demands, all in particular that were really necessary to secure the barriers in the Low Countries and of the four circles against France, would have been so. For France must have continued in this case rather to sue for peace than to treat on an equal foot. The first dauphin, son of Lewis XIV., died several months before this congress began; the second dauphin, his grandson, and the wife and the eldest son of this prince died, soon after it began, of the same unknown distemper, and were buried together in the same grave. Such family misfortunes, following a long series of national misfortunes, made the old king, though he bore them with much seeming magnanimity, desirous to get out of the war at any tolerable rate, that he might not run the risk of leaving a child of five years old, the present king, engaged in it. The queen did all that was morally possible, except giving up her honour in the negotiation, and the interests of her subjects in the conditions of peace, to procure this union with the States General. But all she could do was vain; and the same frenzy that had hindered the Dutch from improving to their and to the common advantage the public misfortunes of France, hindered them from improving to the same purposes the private misfortunes of the house of Bourbon. They continued to flatter themselves that they should force the queen out of her measures by their intrigues with the party in Britain who opposed these measures, and even raise an insurrection against her. But these intrigues, and those of Prince Eugene, were known and disappointed; and Monsieur Buys had the mortification to be reproached with them publicly, when he came to take leave of the lords of the council, by the Earl of Oxford, who entered into many particulars that could not be denied, of the private transactions of this sort, to which Buys had been a party, in compliance with his instructions, and as I believe, much against his own sense and inclinations. As the season for taking the field advanced, the league proposed to defeat the success of the congress by the events of the campaign. But instead of defeating the success of the congress, the events of the campaign served only to turn this success in favour of France. At the beginning of the year, the queen and the States in concert might have given the law to friend and foe, with great advantage to the former, and with such a detriment to the latter as the causes of the war rendered just, the events of it reasonable, and the objects of it necessary. At the end of the year, the allies were no longer in a state of giving, nor the French of receiving the law; and the Dutch had recourse to the queen's good offices, when they could oppose and durst insult her no longer. Even then these offices were employed with zeal and some effect for them.

Thus the war ended much more favourably to France than she

expected, or they who put an end to it designed. The queen would have humbled and weakened this power. The allies who opposed her would have crushed it, and have raised another as exorbitant on the ruins of it. Neither one nor the other succeeded; and they who meant to ruin the French power, preserved it by opposing those who meant to reduce it.

Since I have mentioned the events of the year 1712, and the decisive turn they gave to the negotiations in favour of France, give me leave to say something more on this subject. You will find that I shall do so with much impartiality. The disastrous events of this campaign in the Low Countries, and the consequences of them, have been imputed to the separation of the British troops from the army of the allies. The clamour against this measure was great at that time, and the prejudices which this clamour raised are great still among some men. But as clamour raised these prejudices, other prejudices gave birth to this clamour; and it is no wonder they should do so among persons bent on continuing the war, since I own very freely, that when the first step that led to this separation came to my knowledge, which was not an hour, by the way, before I writ by the queen's order to the Duke of Ormond, in the very words in which the order was advised and given, 'that he should not engage in any siege, nor hazard a battle, etc.' further 'order,' I was surprised and hurt. So much, that if I had had an opportunity of speaking in private to the queen after I had received Monsieur De Torcy's letter to me on the subject, and before she went into the council, I should have spoken to her, I think, in the first heat against it. The truth is, however, that the step was justifiable at that point of time in every respect, and therefore that the consequences are to be charged to the account of those who drew them on themselves, not to the account of the queen, nor of the minister who advised her. The step was justifiable to the allies surely, since the queen took no more upon her, no not so much by far, in making it, as many of them had done by suspending, or endangering, or defeating operations in the heat of the war, when they declined to send their troops, or delayed the march of them, or neglected the preparations they were obliged to make on the most frivolous pretences. Your lordship will find in the course of your inquiries many particular instances of what is here pointed out in general. But I cannot help descending into some few of those that regard the emperor and the States General, who cried the loudest and with the most effect, though they had the least reason, on account of their own conduct, to complain of the queen's. With what face could the emperor, for instance, presume to complain of the orders sent to the Duke of Ormond? I say nothing of his deficiencies, which were so great, that he had at this very time little more than one regiment that could be said properly to act against France and Spain at his sole charge; as I affirmed to Prince Eugene before the lords of the

council, and demonstrated upon paper the next day. I say nothing of all that preceded the year 1707, on which I should have much to say. But I desire your lordship only to consider what you will find to have passed after the famous year 1706. Was it with the queen's approbation or against her will that the emperor made the treaty for the evacuation of Lombardy, and let out so great a number of French regiments time enough to recruit themselves at home, to march into Spain, and to destroy the British forces at Almanza? Was it with her approbation or against her will, that instead of employing all his forces and all his endeavours to make the greatest design of the whole war, the enterprise on Toulon, succeed, he detached 12,000 men to reduce the kingdom of Naples, that must have fallen of course? and that an opportunity of ruining the whole maritime force of France, and of ruining or subduing her provinces on that side was lost, merely by this unnecessary diversion, and by the conduct of Prince Eugene, which left no room to doubt that he gave occasion to this fatal disappointment on purpose and in concert with the court of Vienna.

Turn your eyes, my lord, on the conduct of the States, and you will find reason to be astonished at the arrogance of the men who governed in them at this time, and who presumed to exclaim against a queen of Great Britain, for doing what their deputies had done more than once in that very country, and in the course of that very war. In the year 1712, at the latter end of the war, when conferences for treating a peace were opened, when the least sinister event in the field would take off from that superiority which the allies had in the congress, and when the past success of the war had already given them as much of this superiority as they wanted to obtain a safe, advantageous, honourable and lasting peace, the queen directed her general to suspend till further order the operations of her troops. In 1703, in the beginning of a war, when something was to be risked or no success to be expected, and when the bad situation of affairs in Germany and Italy required in a particular manner, that efforts should be made in the Low Countries, and that the war should not languish there whilst it was unsuccessful everywhere else; the Duke of Marlborough determined to attack the French, but the Dutch deputies would not suffer their troops to go on; defeated his design in the very moment of its execution, if I remember well, and gave no other reason for their proceeding than that which is a reason against every battle, the possibility of being beaten. The circumstance of proximity to their frontier was urged I know, and it was said that their provinces would be exposed to the incursions of the French if they lost the battle. But besides other answers to this vain pretence, it was obvious that they had ventured battles as near home as this would have been fought, and that the way to remove the enemy farther off was by action, not inaction. Upon the whole matter, the Dutch deputies stopped the progress of the con-

federate army at this time by exercising an arbitrary and independent authority over the troops of the States. In 1703, when the success of the preceding campaign should have given them an entire confidence in the Duke of Marlborough's conduct, when returning from the Moselle to the Low Countries, he began to make himself and the common cause amends, for the disappointment which pride and jealousy in the Prince of Eades, or usual sloth and negligence in the Germans, had occasioned just before, by forcing the French allies; when he was in the full pursuit of this advantage, and when he was marching to attack an enemy half defeated, and more than half dispirited; nay, when he had made his dispositions for attacking, and part of his troops had passed the Dyle—the deputies of the States once more tied up his hands, took from him an opportunity too fair to be lost; for these, I think, were some of the terms of his complaint, and in short the confederacy received an affront at least, where we might have obtained a victory. Let this that has been said serve as a specimen of the independency on the queen, her councils, and her generals, with which these powers acted in the course of the war; who were not ashamed to find fault that the queen, once, and at the latter end of it, presumed to suspend the operations of her troops till further order. But be it that they foresaw what this further order would be. They foresaw then, that as soon as Dunkirk should be put into the queen's hands, she would consent to a suspension of arms for two months, and invite them to do the same. Neither this foresight, nor the strong declaration which the Bishop of Bristol made by the queen's order at Utrecht, and which showed them that her resolution was taken not to submit to the league into which they had entered against her, could prevail on them to make a right use of these two months, by endeavouring to renew their union and good understanding with the queen: though I can say with the greatest truth, and they could not doubt of it at the time, that she would have gone more than half-way to meet them, and that her ministers would have done their utmost to bring it about. Even then we might have resumed the superiority we began to lose in the congress; for the queen and the States uniting, the principal allies would have united with them: and, in this case, it would have been so much the interest of France to avoid any chance of seeing the war renewed, that she must, and she would, have made sure of peace, during the suspension, on much worse terms for herself and for Spain, than she made it afterwards. But the prudent and sober States continued to act like foward children, or like men drunk with resentment and passion; and such will the conduct be of the wisest governments in every circumstance, where a spirit of faction and of private interest prevails among those who are at the head, over reason of state. After laying aside all decency in their behaviour towards the queen, they laid aside all caution for themselves. They declared 'they would

'carry on the war without her.' Landrecy seemed, in their esteem, of more importance than Dunkirk; and the opportunity of wasting some French provinces, or of putting the whole event of the war on the decision of another battle, preferable to the other measure that lay open to them; that I mean of trying, in good earnest, and in an honest concert with the queen, during the suspension of arms, whether such terms of peace as ought to satisfy them and the other allies, might not be imposed on France?

If the confederate army had broke into France the campaign before this, or in any former campaign; and if the Germans and the Dutch had exercised then the same inhumanity as the French had exercised in their provinces in former wars; if they had burned Versailles, and even Paris, and if they had disturbed the ashes of the dead princes that repose at Saint Denis, every good man would have felt the horror, that such cruelties inspire: no man could have said that the retaliation was unjust. But in 1712, it was too late in every respect to meditate such projects. If the French had been unprepared to defend their frontier, either for want of means or in a vain confidence that the peace would be made, as our King Charles II. was unprepared to defend his coast at the latter end of his first war with Holland, the allies might have played a sure game in satisfying their vengeance on the French, as the Dutch did on us in 1667; and imposing harder terms on them than those they offered, or would have accepted. But this was not the case. The French army was, I believe, more numerous than the army of the allies, even before separation, and certainly in much a better condition than two or three years before when a deluge of blood was spilt to dislodge them, for we did no more at Malplaquet. Would the Germans and the Dutch have found it more easy to force them at this time, than it was at that? Would not the French have fought with as much obstinacy to save Paris, as they did to save Mons? And, with all the regard due to the Duke of Ormond and to Prince Eugene, was the absence of the Duke of Marlborough of no consequence? Turn this affair every way in your thoughts, my lord, and you will find that the Germans and the Dutch had nothing in theirs, but to break, at any rate, and at any risk the negotiations that were begun, and to reduce Great Britain to the necessity of continuing, what she had been too long, a province of the confederacy. A province indeed, and not one of the best treated; since the confederates assumed a right of obliging her to keep her pacts with them, and of dispensing with their obligations to her; of exhausting her, without rule, or proportion, or measure, in the support of a war, to which she alone contributed more than all of them, and in which she had no longer an immediate interest, nor even any remote interest that was not common, or, with respect to her, very dubious; and after all this, of complaining that the queen presumed to hearken to overtures of

peace, and to set a negotiation at foot while their honour and ambition required that the war should be prolonged for an important issue, and for a purpose that was either bad or unimportant.

The suspension of arms that began in the late 'Centinel' was continued, and extended afterwards by the act of August 1st, 1712, innumerable. The fortune of the war turned at the same time; and all these disgraces followed, which obliged the Dutch to treat, and to obtain the assistance of the queen, whom they had set at defiance at first. This assistance they had as effectually as it could be given in the circumstances to which they had reduced themselves after the Dutch alliance; and the peace of Great Britain, Portugal, Savoy, Prussia, and the States General, was made, without his imperial majesty's concurrence, in the spring of 1713, as it might have been made much more advantageously for them all, in that of 1712. Less obstinately on the part of the States, and perhaps more decisive resolutions on the part of the queen, would have wound up all these divided threads in one, and have finished this great work much sooner and better. I say, perhaps more decisive resolutions on the part of the queen, because, although I think that I should have conveyed her orders for signing a treaty of peace with France before the armies took the field, much more willingly than I executed them afterwards in signing that of the cessation of arms; yet I do not presume to decide, but shall desire your lordship to do so, on a review of all circumstances, some of which I shall just mention.

The league made for protracting the war having opposed the queen to the utmost of their power, and by means of every sort, from the first appearances of a negotiation; the general effect of this violent opposition, on her and her ministers was, to make them proceed by slower and more cautious steps: the particular effect of it was, to oblige them to open the eyes of the nation, and to inflame the people with a desire of peace, by showing, in the most public and solemn manner, how unequally we were burdened, and how unfairly we were treated by our allies. The first gave an air of diffidence and timidity to their conduct, which encouraged the league, and gave vigour to the opposition. The second irritated the Dutch particularly; for the emperor and the other allies had the modesty, at least not to pretend to bear any proportion in the expense of the war; and thus the two powers, whose union was the most essential, were the most at variance, and the queen was obliged to act in a closer concert with her enemy who desired peace, than she would have done if her allies had been less obstinately bent to protract the war. During these transactions, my lord Oxford, who had his correspondencies apart, and a private thread of negotiation always in his hands, entertained hopes that Philip would be brought to abandon Spain in favour of his father-in-law, and to content himself with the crown of prince, the kingdom

of Sicily, and the preservation of his right of succession to the crown of France. Whether my lord had any particular reasons for entertaining these hopes, besides the general reasons founded on the condition of France, on that of the Bourbon family, and on the disposition of Lewis XIV., I doubt very much. That Lewis, who sought, and had need of seeking peace, almost at any rate, and who saw that he could not obtain it, even of the queen, unless Philip abandoned immediately the crown of Spain, or abandoned immediately, by renunciation and a solemn act of exclusion, all pretension to that of France; that Lewis was desirous of the former, I cannot doubt. That Philip would have abandoned Spain, with the equivalents that have been mentioned, or either of them, I believe likewise, if the present King of France had died, when his father, mother, and eldest brother did: for they all had the same distemper. But Lewis would use no violent means to force his grandson; the queen would not continue the war to force him; Philip was too obstinate, and his wife too ambitious, to quit the crown of Spain, when they had discovered our weakness, and felt their own strength in that country, by their success in the campaign of 1710; after which my lord Stanhope himself was convinced that Spain could not be conquered, nor kept if it was conquered, without a much greater army than it was possible for us to send thither. In that situation it was wild to imagine, as the Earl of Oxford imagined, or pretended to imagine, that they would quit the crown of Spain, for a remote and uncertain prospect of succeeding to that of France, and to content themselves to be, in the mean time, princes of very small dominions. Philip therefore, after struggling long that he might not be obliged to make his option till the succession of France lay open to him, was obliged to make it, and made it, for Spain. Now this, my lord, was the very crisis of the negotiation; and to this point I apply what I said above of the effect of more decisive resolutions on the part of the queen. It was plain, that, if she made the campaign in concert with her allies, she could be no longer mistress of the negotiations, nor have almost a chance for conducting them to the issue she proposed. Our ill success in the field would have rendered the French less tractable in the congress: our good success there would have rendered the allies so. On this principle the queen suspended the operations of her troops, and then concluded the cessation.

Compare now the appearances and effect of this measure with the appearances and effect that another measure would have had. In order to arrive at any peace, it was necessary to do what the queen did, or to do more; and in order to arrive at a good one, it was necessary to be prepared to carry on the war, as well as to make a show of it, for she had the hard task upon her of guarding against her allies and her enemies both. But in that ferment, when few men considered anything

coolly, the conduct of her general after he took the field, though he covered the allies in the siege of Quesnoy, corresponded ill in appearance with the declarations of carrying on the war vigorously that had been made on several occasions before the campaign opened. It had an air of double dealing, and as such it passed among those who did not combine in their thoughts all the circumstances of the conjuncture, or who were infatuated with the national necessity of continuing the war. The clamour could not have been greater if the queen had signed her peace separately, and I think the indecision might have been explained as favourable to the war in a degree. From the death of the Emperor, March 1st, was neither the emperor, nor the common interest well understood, or at least it rested on the present emperor's head. His son however as well as his wife his option (and if she had taken his resolution she would have been sooner made) I presume that he was right in his judgment that she would not continue her war in case of a recognition for his imperial majesty that he acknowledged he had done, & that he was archduke bound her to renew her war in case of an empire, the very nature of her war leaving her no other than to measures to prevent it any longer and when France & Spain & France and Spain and when he came to the conclusion of a much less fight in bringing about a reconciliation when the French and Spanish emperors had lost the alliance & when he intended this month that two days ago when he had not yet ventured to break with the emperor had a case to put the reasonable difficulties he had in the case without regard to his own honour & he could not be answered in his defence & he turned and ordered her minister a day or two ago to inform of Duxelles that the emperor had no friends or allies, but that the emperor & his court were of opinion that France was obliged to give a general way to their creatures at the same time a general & immediate recognition of the new emperor & mediation. There had been however no such proceeding and he said that had not been the case & would have granted them no answer & that the Council would have done the same & that one that of the other emperors was very different from this. & that they had abandoned their allies & that there was no advantage to be had in this & that the greatest danger to a monarch was not treachery and that the king was under fire and hot

to check their obstinacy, nor to hinder them from making all the unfortunate haste they did make to get themselves beaten at Denain. But they would possibly have laid aside their vain hopes if they had seen the queen's ministers ready to sign her treaty of peace, and those of some principal allies ready to sign at the same time; in which case the mischief that followed had been prevented, and better terms of peace had been obtained for the confederacy; a prince of the house of Bourbon, who could never be King of France, would have sat on the Spanish throne, instead of an emperor; the Spanish sceptre would have been weakened in the hands of one, and the imperial sceptre would have been strengthened in those of the other; France would have had no opportunity of recovering from former blows, nor of finishing a long unsuccessful war by two successful campaigns; her ambition and her power would have declined with her old king, and under the minority that followed; one of them at least might have been so reduced by the terms of peace, if the defeat of the allies in 1712, and the loss of so many towns as the French took in that and the following year had been prevented, that the other would have been no longer formidable, even supposing it to have continued; whereas I suppose that the tranquillity of Europe is more due at this time to want of ambition, than to want of power, on the part of France. But to carry the comparison of these two measures to the end, it may be supposed that the Dutch would have taken the same part on the queen's declaring a separate peace, as they took on her declaring a cessation. The preparations for the campaign in the Low Countries were made; the Dutch, like the other confederates, had a just confidence in their own troops, and an unjust contempt for those of the enemy; they were transported from their usual sobriety and caution by the ambitious prospect of large acquisitions, which had been opened artfully to them; the rest of the confederate army was composed of imperial and German troops, so that the Dutch, the imperialists, and the other Germans, having an interest to decide which was no longer the interest of the whole confederacy, they might have united against the queen in one case, as they did in the other, and the mischief that followed to them and the common cause might not have been prevented. This might have been the case no doubt. They might have flattered themselves that they should be able to break into France, and to force Philip, by the distress brought on his grandfather, to resign the crown of Spain to the emperor, even after Great Britain and Portugal, and Savoy too perhaps, were drawn out of the war; for these princes desired as little as the queen to see the Spanish crown on the emperor's head. But even in this case, though the madness would have been greater, the effect would have not been worse. The queen would have been able to serve these confederates as well by being mediator in the negotiations, as they left it in their power to do

by being a party in them ; and Great Britain would have had the advantage of being delivered so much sooner from a burden, which whimsical and wicked politics had imposed, and continued upon her till it was become intolerable. Of these two measures, at the time when we might have taken either, there were persons who thought the last preferable to the former. But it never came into public debate. Indeed it never could ; too much time having been lost in waiting for the option of Philip, and the suspension and cessation having been brought before the council rather as a measure taken, than a matter to be debated. If your lordship or any one else should judge, that in such circumstances as those of the confederacy in the beginning of 1712, the latter measure ought to have been taken, and the Gordian knot to have been cut, rather than to suffer a mock treaty to languish on with so much advantage to the French as the disunion of the allies gave them ; in short, if slowness, perplexity, inconsistency, and indecision should be objected, in some instances, to the queen's councils at that time ; if it should be said particularly, that she did not observe the precise moment when the conduct of the league formed against her being exposed to mankind, would have justified any part she should have taken (though she declared, soon after the moment was passed, that this conduct had set her free from all her engagements), and when she ought to have taken that of drawing by one bold measure her allies out of the war, or herself out of the confederacy, before she lost her influence on France ; if all this should be objected, yet would the proofs brought to support these objections show, that we were better allies than politicians, that the desire the queen had to treat in concert with her confederates, and the resolution she took not to sign without them, made her bear what no crowned head had ever borne before : and that where she erred, she erred principally by the patience, the compliance, and the condescension she exercised towards them, and towards her own subjects in league with them. Such objections as these may lie to the queen's conduct in the course of this great affair, as well as objections of human infirmity to that of the persons employed by her in the transactions of it, from which neither those who preceded, nor those who succeeded, have I presume been free. But the principles on which they proceeded were honest, the means they used were lawful, and the event they proposed to bring about was just. Whereas the very foundation of all the opposition to the peace was laid in injustice and folly ; for what could be more unjust, than the attempt of the Dutch and the Germans to force the queen to continue a war for their private interest and ambition, the disproportionate expense of which oppressed the commerce of her subjects, and loaded them with debts for ages yet to come ? a war, the object of which was so changed, that from the year 1711, she made it not only without any engagement, but against her own and the com-

mon interest? What could be more foolish; you will think that I soften the term too much, and you will be in the right to think so: what could be more foolish, than the attempt of a party in Britain to protract a war so ruinous to their country, without any reason that they durst avow, except that of wreaking the resentments of Europe on France, and that of uniting the imperial and Spanish crowns on an Austrian head? one of which was to purchase revenge at a price too dear, and the other was to expose the liberties of Europe to new dangers, by the conclusion of a war which had been made to assert and secure them?

I have dwelt the longer on the conduct of those who promoted, and of those who opposed, the negotiations of the peace made at Utrecht, and on the comparison of the measure pursued by the queen with that which she might have pursued, because the great benefit we ought to reap from the study of history, cannot be reaped unless we accustom ourselves to compare the conduct of different governments and different parties, in the same conjunctures, and to observe the measures they did pursue, and the measures they might have pursued, with the actual consequences that followed one, and the possible or probable consequences, that might have followed the other. By this exercise of the mind, the study of history anticipates, as it were, experience, as I have observed in one of the first of these letters, and prepares us for action. If this consideration should not plead a sufficient excuse for my prolixity on this head, I have one more to add that may. A rage of warring possessed a party in our nation till the death of the late queen; a rage of negotiating has possessed the same party of men ever since. You have seen the consequences of one; you see actually those of the other. The rage of warring confirmed the beggary of our nation, which began as early as the revolution; but then it gave, in the last war, reputation to our arms and our councils too. For though I think, and must always think, that the principle on which we acted after departing from that laid down in the grand alliance of 1701 was wrong; yet must we confess that it was pursued wisely, as well as boldly. The rage of negotiating has been a chargeable rage likewise, at least as chargeable in its proportion. Far from paying our debts, contracted in war, they continue much the same, after three and twenty years of peace. The taxes that oppress our mercantile interest the most are still in mortgage; and those that oppress the landed interest the most, instead of being laid on extraordinary occasions, are become the ordinary funds for the current service of every year. This is grievous, and the more so to any man who has the honour of his country, as well as her prosperity, at heart, because we have not, in this case, the airy consolation we had in the other. The rage of negotiating began twenty years ago, under pretence of consummating the treaty of Utrecht;

and, from that time to this, our ministers have been in one perpetual maze. They have made themselves and us, often, objects of aversion to the powers on the continent ; and we are become at last objects of contempt, even to the Spaniards. What other effect could our absurd conduct have ? What other return has it deserved ? We came exhausted out of long wars ; and, instead of pursuing the measures necessary to give us means and opportunity to repair our strength and to diminish our burdens, our ministers have acted, from that time to this, like men who sought pretences to keep the nation in the same exhausted condition and under the same load of debt. This may have been their view perhaps ; and we could not be surprised if we heard the same men declare national poverty necessary to support the present government, who have so frequently declared corruption and a standing army to be so. Your good sense, my lord, your virtue and your love of your country, will always determine you to oppose such vile schemes, and to contribute your utmost towards the cure of both these kinds of rage ; the rage of warring, without any proportionable interest of our own, for the ambition of others ; and the rage of negotiating, on every occasion, at any rate, without a sufficient call to it, and without any part of that deciding influence which we ought to have. Our nation inhabits an island, and is one of the principal nations of Europe ; but, to maintain this rank, we must take the advantages of this situation, which have been neglected by us for almost half a century : we must always remember, that we are not part of the continent, but we must never forget that we are neighbours to it. I will conclude, by applying a rule that Horace gives for the conduct of an epic or dramatic poem, to the part Great Britain ought to take in the affairs of the continent, if you allow me to transform Britannia into a male divinity, as the verse requires.

Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus inciderit.

If these reflections are just, and I should not have offered them to your lordship had they not appeared both just and important to my best understanding, you will think that I have not spent your time unprofitably in making them, and exciting you by them to examine the true interest of your country relatively to foreign affairs ; and to compare it with those principles of conduct, that, I am persuaded, have no other foundation than party designs, prejudices, and habits ; the private interest of some men, and the ignorance and rashness of others.

My letter is grown so long, that I shall say nothing to your lordship at this time concerning the study of modern history, relatively to the interests of your country in domestic affairs ; and I think there will be no need to do so at any other. The history of the rebellion by your great grandfather, and his private memorials, which your lordship has

in manuscript, will guide you surely as far as they go ; where they leave you, your lordship must not expect any history ; for we have more reason to make this complaint, ‘abest enim historia litteris ‘nostris,’ than Tully had to put it into the mouth of Atticus in his first book of laws. But where history leaves you, it is wanted least ; the traditions of this century, and of the latter end of the last, are fresh. Many who were actors in some of these events are alive ; and many who have conversed with those that were actors in others. The public is in possession of several collections and memorials, and several there are in private hands. You will want no materials to form true notions of transactions so recent. Even pamphlets, written on different sides and on different occasions in our party disputes, and histories of no more authority than pamphlets, will help you to come at truth. Read them with suspicion, my lord, for they deserve to be suspected ; pay no regard to the epithets given nor to the judgments passed ; neglect all declamation, weigh the reasoning, and advert to fact. With such precautions, even Burnet’s history may be of some use. In a word, your lordship will want no help of mine to discover, by what progression the whole constitution of our country, and even the character of our nation, has been altered ; nor how much a worse use, in a national sense, though a better in the sense of party politics, the men called whigs have made of long wars and new systems of revenue, since the revolution ; than the men called tories made before it, of long peace and stale prerogative. When you look back three or four generations ago, you will see that the English were a plain, perhaps a rough, but a good-natured hospitable people, jealous of their liberties, and able as well as ready to defend them, with their tongues, their pens, and their swords. The restoration began to turn hospitality into luxury, pleasure into debauch, and country peers and country commoners into courtiers and men of mode. But whilst our luxury was young, it was little more than elegance ; the debauch of that age was enlivened with wit, and varnished over with gallantry. The courtiers, and the men of mode, knew what the constitution was, respected it, and often asserted it. Arts and sciences flourished, and, if we grew more trivial, we were not become either grossly ignorant or openly profligate. Since the revolution, our kings have been reduced indeed to a seeming annual dependence on parliament ; but the business of parliament, which was esteemed in general a duty before, has been exercised in general as a trade since. The trade of parliament, and the trade of funds, have grown universal. Men, who stood forward in the world, have attended to little else. The frequency of parliaments, that increased their importance, and should have increased the respect for them, has taken off from their dignity ; and the spirit that prevailed, whilst the service in them was duty, has been debased since it became a trade. Few know, and scarce any respect, the British constitution ; that

of the Church has been long since derided ; that of the State as long neglected ; and both have been left at the mercy of the men in power, whoever those men were. Thus the Church, at least the hierarchy, however sacred in its origin or wise in its institution, is become an useless burden on the State ; and the State is become, under ancient and known forms, a new and undefinable monster ; composed of a king without monarchical splendour, a senate of nobles without aristocratical independency, and a senate of commons without democratical freedom. In the mean time, my lord, the very idea of wit, and all that can be called taste, has been lost among the great ; arts and sciences are scarce alive ; luxury has been increased, but not refined ; corruption has been established, and is avowed. When governments are worn out, thus it is ; the decay appears in every instance. Public and private virtue, public and private spirit, science, and wit, decline all together.

That you, my lord, may have a long and glorious share in restoring all these, and in drawing our government back to the true principles of it, I wish most heartily. Whatever errors I may have committed in public life, I have always loved my country : whatever faults may be objected to me in private life, I have always loved my friend : whatever usage I have received from my country, it shall never make me break with her ; whatever usage I have received from my friends, I never shall break with one of them, while I think him a friend to my country. These are the sentiments of my heart. I know they are those of your lordship's : and a communion of such sentiments is a tie that will engage me to be, as long as I live,

My lord, your most faithful servant,
HENRY ST. JOHN.

LETTER I.

A PLAN FOR

A GENERAL HISTORY OF EUROPE.

I SHALL take the liberty of writing to you a little oftener than the three or four times a year, which, you tell me, are all you can allow yourself to write to those you like best ; and yet I declare to you with great truth, that you never knew me so busy in your life as I am at

present. You must not imagine from hence, that I am writing memoirs of myself. The subject is too slight to descend to posterity, in any other manner than by that occasional mention which may be made of any little actor in the history of our age. Sylla, Cæsar, and others of that rank, were, whilst they lived, at the head of mankind ; their story was in some sort the story of the world, and as such might very properly be transmitted under their names to future generations. But for those who have acted much inferior parts, if they publish the piece, and call it after their own names, they are impertinent ; if they publish only their own share in it, they inform mankind by halves, and neither give much instruction, nor create much attention. France abounds with writers of this sort, and, I think, we fall into the other extreme. Let me tell you, on this occasion, what has sometimes come into my thoughts.

There is hardly any century in history which began by opening so great a scene, as the century wherein we live, and shall, I suppose, die. Compare it with others, even the most famous, and you will think so. I will sketch the two last, to help your memory.

The loss of that balance which Lorenzo of Medici had preserved, during his time, in Italy ; the expedition of Charles VIII. to Naples ; the intrigues of the Duke of Milan, who spun, with all the refinements of art, that net wherein he was taken at last himself ; the successful dexterity of Ferdinand the Catholic, who built one pillar of the Austrian greatness in Spain, in Italy, and in the Indies ; as the succession of the house of Burgundy joined to the imperial dignity and the hereditary countries, established another in the upper and lower Germany ; these causes, and many others, combined to form a very extraordinary conjuncture ; and, by their consequences, to render the sixteenth century fruitful of great events, and of astonishing revolutions.

The beginning of the seventeenth opened still a greater and more important scene. The Spanish yoke was well-nigh imposed on Italy by the famous triumvirate, Toledo at Milan, Ossuna at Naples, and La Cueva at Venice. The distractions of France, as well as the state-policy of the queen mother, seduced by Rome, and amused by Spain ; the despicable character of our James I., the rashness of the elector palatine, the bad intelligence of the princes and states of the league in Germany, the mercenary temper of John George of Saxony, and the great qualities of Maximilian of Bavaria, raised Ferdinand II. to the imperial throne ; when, the males of the elder branch of the Austrian family in Germany being extinguished at the death of Matthias, nothing was more desirable, nor perhaps more practicable, than to throw the empire into another house. Germany ran the same risk as Italy had done ; Ferdinand seemed more likely, even than Charles V. had been, to become absolute master ; and, if France had not furnished the greatest minister, and the north the greatest captain, of that age

in the same point of time, Vienna and Madrid would have given the law to the western world.

As the Austrian scale sunk, that of Bourbon rose. The true date of the rise of that power, which has made the kings of France so considerable in Europe, goes up as high as Charles VII. and Lewis XI. The weakness of our Henry VI., the loose conduct of Edward IV., and perhaps the oversights of Henry VII., helped very much to knit that monarchy together, as well as to enlarge it. Advantage might have been taken of the divisions which religion occasioned; and supporting the protestant party in France would have kept that crown under restraints, and under inabilitys, in some measure equal to those which were occasioned anciently by the vast alienations of its demesnes, and by the exorbitant power of its vassals. But James I. was incapable of thinking with sense or acting with spirit. Charles I. had an imperfect glimpse of his true interest, but his uxorious temper, and the extravagancy of that madman Buckingham, gave Richelieu time to finish a great part of his project; and the miseries that followed in England gave Cardinal Mazarin time and opportunity to complete the system. The last great act of this cardinal's administration was the Pyrenean treaty.

Here I would begin, by representing the face of Europe such as it was at that epocha, the interests and the conduct of England, France, Spain, Holland, and the empire. A summary recapitulation should follow of all the steps taken by France, during more than twenty years, to arrive at the great object she had proposed to herself in making this treaty; the most solemn article of which, the minister who negotiated it designed should be violated; as appears by his letters, written from the Island of Pheasants, if I mistake not. After this, another draught of Europe should have its place, according to the relations which the several powers stood in one towards another, in 1688, and the alterations which the revolution in England made in the politics of Europe. A summary account should follow of the events of the war that ended in 1697, with the different views of King William III., and Lewis XIV., in making the peace of Ryswick; which matter has been much canvassed, and is little understood. Then the dispositions made by the partition-treaties, and the influences and consequences of these treaties; and a third draught of the state of Europe at the death of Charles II. of Spain. All this would make the subject of one or two books, and would be the most proper introduction imaginable to a history of that war with which our century began, and of the peace which followed.

This war, foreseen for above half a century, had been, during all that time, the great and constant object of the councils of Europe. The prize to be contended for was the richest that ever had been staked, since those of the Persian and Roman empires. The union of

two powers, which separately, and in opposition, had aimed at universal monarchy, was apprehended. The confederates therefore engaged in it, to maintain a balance between the two houses of Austria and Bourbon, in order to preserve their security, and to assert their independence. But with the success of the war they changed their views; and, if ambition began it on the side of France, ambition continued it on the other. The battles, the sieges, the surprising revolutions, which happened in the course of this war, are not to be paralleled in any period of the same compass. The motives and the measures by which it was protracted, the true reasons why it ended in a war, which appeared not proportionable to its success; and the new political state into which Europe was thrown by the treaties of Utrecht and Baden, are subjects on which few persons have the necessary informations, and yet every one speaks with assurance, and even with passion. I think I could speak on them with some knowledge, and with as much indifference as Polybius does of the negotiations of his father Lycortas, even in those points where I was myself an actor.

I will even confess to you, that I should not despair of performing this part better than the former. There is nothing, in my opinion, so hard to execute, as those political maps, if you will allow me such an expression, and those systems of hints, rather than relations of events, which are necessary to connect and explain them; and which must be so concise, and yet so full; so complicate, and yet so clear. I know nothing of this sort well done by the ancients. Salust's introduction, as well as that of Thucydides, might serve almost for any other piece of the Roman or Greek story, as well as for those which these two great authors chose. Polybius does not come up, in his introduction, to this idea neither. Among the moderns, the first book of Machiavel's 'History of Florence' is a noble original of this kind: and perhaps father Paul's 'History of Benefices' is, in the same kind of composition, inimitable.

These are a few of those thoughts which come into my mind when I consider how incumbent it is on every man, that he should be able to give an account even of his leisure; and, in the midst of solitude, be of some use to society.

I know not whether I shall have courage enough to undertake the task I have chalked out. I distrust my abilities with reason, and I shall want several informations, not easy, I doubt, for me to obtain. But, in all events, it will not be possible for me to go about it in this year; the reasons of which would be long enough to fill another letter, and I doubt that you will think this grown too bulky already. Adieu.

LETTER II.

BOLINGBROKE ON THE TRUE USE
OF RETIREMENT AND STUDY.

To the Right Honourable LORD BATHURST.

SINCE my last to your lordship, this is the first favourable opportunity I have had of keeping the promise I made you. I will avoid prolixity, as much as I can, in a first draught of my thoughts, but I must give you them as they rise in my mind, without staying to marshal them in close order.

As proud as we are of human reason, nothing can be more absurd than the general system of human life and human knowledge. This faculty of distinguishing true from false, right from wrong, and what is agreeable, from what is repugnant to nature, either by one act, or by a longer process of intuition, has not been given with so sparing a hand, as many appearances would make us apt to believe. If it was cultivated, therefore, as early, and as carefully as it might be, and if the exercise of it was left generally as free as it ought to be, our common notions and opinions would be more consonant to truth than they are ; and truth being but one, they would be more uniform likewise.

But this rightful mistress of human life and knowledge, whose proper office it is to preside over both, and to direct us in the conduct of one and the pursuit of the other, becomes degraded in the intellectual economy. She is reduced to a mean and servile state, to the vile drudgery of conniving at principles, defending opinions, and confirming habits that are none of hers. They who do her most honour, who consult her oftenest, and obey her too very often, are still guilty of limiting her authority according to maxims, and rules, and schemes, that chance, or ignorance, or interest, first devised, and that custom sanctifies : custom, that result of the passions and prejudices of many, and of the designs of a few : that ape of reason, who usurps her seat, exercises her power, and is obeyed by mankind in her stead. Men find it easy, and government makes it profitable, to concur in established systems of speculation and practice ; and the whole turn of education prepares them to live upon credit all their lives. Much pains are taken, and time bestowed, to teach us what to think, but little or none of either, to instruct us how to think. The magazine of the memory is stored and stuffed betimes ; but the conduct of the

understanding is all along neglected, and the free exercise of it is, in effect, forbid in all places, and in terms in some.

There is a strange distrust of human reason in every human institution : this distrust is so apparent, that an habitual submission to some authority or other is forming in us from our cradles ; that principles of reasoning and matters of fact are inculcated in our tender minds, before we are able to exercise that reason ; and that, when we are able to exercise it, we are either forbid, or frightened from doing so, even on things that are themselves the proper objects of reason, or that are delivered to us upon an authority whose sufficiency or insufficiency is so most evidently.

On many subjects, such as the general laws of natural religion, and the general rules of society and good policy, men of all countries and languages, who cultivate their reason, judge alike. The same premises have led them to the same conclusions, and so, following the same guide, they have trod in the same path ; at least, the differences are small, easily reconciled, and such as could not, of themselves, distinguish nation from nation, religion from religion, and sect from sect. How comes it then that there are other points, on which the most opposite opinions are entertained, and some of these with so much heat and fury, that the men on one side of the hedge will die for the affirmative, and the men on the other for the negative ? ‘*Toute ‘opinion est assez forte pour se faire épouser au prix de la vie,*’ says Montaigne, whom I often quote, as I do Seneca, rather for the smartness of expression, than the weight of matter. Look narrowly into it, and you will find that the points agreed on, and the points disputed, are not proportionable to the common sense and general reason of mankind. Nature and truth are the same everywhere, and reason shows them everywhere alike. But the accidental and other causes, which give rise and growth to opinions, both in speculation and practice, are of infinite variety ; and wherever these opinions are once confirmed by custom and propagated by education, various, inconsistent, contradictory as they are, they all pretend (and all their pretences are backed by pride, by passion, and by interest) to have reason, or revelation, or both, on their side : though neither reason nor revelation can be possibly on the side of more than one, and may be possibly on the side of none.

Thus it happens that the people of Tibet are Tartars and idolaters, that they are Turks and Mahometans at Constantinople, Italians and papists at Rome ; and how much soever education may be less confined, and the means of knowledge more attainable, in France and our own country, yet thus it happens in great measure that Frenchmen and Roman Catholics are bred at Paris, and Englishmen and Protestants at London. For men, indeed, properly speaking, are bred nowhere ; every one thinks the system, as he speaks the language, of his

country ; at least, there are few that think, and none that act, in any country, according to the dictates of pure unbiassed reason ; unless they may be said to do so, when reason directs them to speak and act according to the system of their country, or sect, at the same time as she leads them to think according to that of nature and truth.

Thus the far greatest part of mankind appears reduced to a lower state than other animals, in that very respect on account of which we claim so great superiority over them ; because instinct, that has its due effect, is preferable to reason that has not. I suppose in this place, with philosophers, and the vulgar, that which I am in no wise ready to affirm, that other animals have no share of human reason ; for let me say by the way, it is much more likely other animals should share the human, which is denied, than that man should share the Divine reason, which is affirmed. But, supposing our monopoly of reason, would not your lordship choose to walk upon four legs, to wear a long tail, and to be called a beast, with the advantage of being determined by irresistible and unerring instinct to those truths that are necessary to your well-being ; rather than to walk on two legs, to wear no tail, and to be honoured with the title of man, at the expense of deviating from them perpetually ? Instinct acts spontaneously whenever its action is necessary, and directs the animal according to the purpose for which it was implanted in him. Reason is a nobler and more extensive faculty ; for it extends to the unnecessary as well as necessary, and to satisfy our curiosity as well as our wants ; but reason must be excited, or she will remain inactive ; she must be left free, or she will conduct us wrong, and carry us farther astray from her own precincts than we should go without her help ; in the first case, we have no sufficient guide ; and in the second, the more we employ our reason, the more unreasonable we are.

Now if all this be so, if reason has so little, and ignorance, passion, interest, and custom so much to do, in forming our opinions and our habits, and in directing the whole conduct of human life ; is it not a thing desirable by every thinking man, to have the opportunity, indulged to so few by the course of accidents, the opportunity ‘secum esse, et secum ‘vivere,’ of living some years at least to ourselves, and for ourselves, in a state of freedom, under the laws of reason, instead of passing our whole time in a state of vassalage under those of authority and custom ? Is it not worth our while to contemplate ourselves, and others, and all the things of this world, once before we leave them, through the medium of pure, and, if I may say so, of undefiled reason ? Is it not worth our while to approve or condemn, on our own authority, what we receive in the beginning of life on the authority of other men, who were not then better able to judge for us, than we are now to judge for ourselves ?

That this may be done, and has been done to some degree, by men who remained much more mingled than I design to be for the future,

in the company and business of the world, I shall not deny; but still it is better done in retreat and with greater ease and pleasure. Whilst we remain in the world, we are all fettered down, more or less, to one common level, and have neither all the leisure nor all the means and advantages, to soar above it, which we may procure to ourselves by breaking these fetters in retreat. To talk of abstracting ourselves from matter, laying aside body, and being resolved, as it were, into pure intellect, is proud, metaphysical, unmeaning jargon; but to abstract ourselves from the prejudices, and habits, and pleasures, and business of the world, is no more than many are, though all are not, capable of doing. They who can do this, may elevate their souls in retreat to a higher station, and may take from thence such a view of the world, as the second Scipio took in his dream, from the seats of the blessed, when the whole earth appeared so little to him, that he could scarce discern that speck of dirt, the Roman empire. Such a view as this will increase our knowledge by showing us our ignorance; will distinguish every degree of probability from the lowest to the highest, and mark the distance between that and certainty; will dispel the intoxicating fumes of philosophical presumption, and teach us to establish our peace of mind, where alone it can rest securely, in resignation; in short, such a view will render life more agreeable, and death less terrible. Is not this business, my lord? Is not this pleasure too, the highest pleasure? The world can afford us none such; we must retire from the world to taste it with a full gust; but we shall taste it the better for having been in the world. The share of sensual pleasures, that a man of my age can promise himself, is hardly worth attention; and very little reflection surely will suffice to make his habits of this kind lose their power over him. Besides, your lordship knows that my scheme of retirement excludes none of these pleasures that can be taken with decency and conveniency. As to the habits of business, they can have no hold on one who has been so long tired with it. You may object, that though a man has discarded these habits, and has not even the embers of ambition about him to revive them, yet he cannot renounce all public business as absolutely as I seem to do; because a better principle, a principle of duty, may summon him to the service of his country. I will answer you with great sincerity. No man has higher notions of this duty than I have. I think that scarce any age or circumstances can discharge us entirely from it; no, not my own. But as we are apt to take the impulse of our own passions, for a call to the performance of this duty; so when these passions impel us no longer, the call that puts us upon action must be real, and loud too. Add to this, that there are different methods, proportioned to different circumstances and situations, of performing the same duty. In the midst of retreat, wherever it may be fixed, I may contribute to defend and preserve the British constitution of government; and you, my lord,

may depend upon me, that whenever I can, I will. Should any one ask you, from whom I expect my reward? answer him by declaring, to whom I pay this service: ‘*Deo immortalis, qui me non accipere modo haec a majoribus voluit, sed etiam posteris prodere.*’

But, to lead the life I propose with satisfaction and profit, renouncing the pleasures and business of the world, and breaking the habits of both, is not sufficient; the supine creature whose understanding is superficially employed, through life, about a few general notions, and is never bent to a close and steady pursuit of truth, may renounce the pleasures and business of the world, for even in the business of the world we see such creatures often employed, and may break the habits; nay he may retire and drone away life in solitude, like a monk, or like him over the door of whose house, as if his house had been his tomb, somebody writ, ‘*Here lies such a one.*’ But no such man will be able to make the true use of retirement. The employment of his mind, that would have been agreeable and easy if he had accustomed himself to it early, will be unpleasant and impracticable late; such men lose their intellectual powers for want of exerting them, and, having trifled away youth, are reduced to the necessity of trifling away age. It fares with the mind just as it does with the body. He who was born with a texture of brain as strong as that of Newton, may become unable to perform the common rules of arithmetic; just as he who has the same elasticity in his muscles, the same suppleness in his joints, and all his nerves and sinews as well braced as Jacob Hall, may become a fat unwieldy sluggard. Yet farther: the implicit creature, who has thought it all his life needless, or unlawful, to examine the principles or facts that he took originally on trust, will be as little able as the other to improve his solitude to any good purpose; unless we call it a good purpose, for that sometimes happens, to confirm and exalt his prejudices, so that he may live and die in one continued delirium. The confirmed prejudices of a thoughtful life are as hard to change as the confirmed habits of an indolent life; and as some must trifle away age because they have trifled away youth, others labour on in a maze of error because they have wandered there too long to find their way out.

There is a prejudice in China in favour of little feet, and therefore the feet of girls are swathed and bound up from the cradle, so that the women of that country are unable to walk without tottering and stumbling all their lives. Among the savages of America, there are some who hold flat heads and long ears in great esteem, and therefore press the one and draw down the others so hard from their infancy, that they destroy irrecoverably the true proportions of nature, and continue all their lives ridiculous to every sight but their own. Just so, the first of these characters cannot make any progress, the second will not attempt to make any, in an impartial search after real knowledge.

To set about acquiring the habits of meditation and study late in life

is like getting into a go-cart with a grey beard, and learning to walk when we have lost the use of our legs. In general, the foundations of a happy old age must be laid in youth; and in particular, he who has not cultivated his reason young, will be utterly unable to improve it old.

'Manent ingenia senibus, modo permaneant studium et industria.'

Not only a love of study and a desire of knowledge must have grown up with us, but such an industrious application likewise as requires the whole vigour of the mind to be exerted in the pursuit of truth, through long trains of ideas, and all those dark recesses wherein man, not God, has hid it.

This love and this desire I have felt all my life, and I am not quite a stranger to this industry and application. There has been something always ready to whisper in my ear, whilst I ran the course of pleasure and business, '*Solve senescentem mature sanus equum*'.

But my Genius, unlike the demon of Socrates, whispered so softly, that very often I heard him not, in the hurry of those passions by which I was transported. Some calmer hours there were: in them I hearkened to him. Reflection had often its turn, and the love of study and the desire of knowledge have never quite abandoned me. I am not, therefore, entirely unprepared for the life I will lead, and it is not without reason that I promise myself more satisfaction in the latter part of it than I ever knew in the former.

Your lordship may think this, perhaps, a little too sanguine for one who has lost so much time already; you may put me in mind that human life has no second spring, no second summer; you may ask me what I mean by sowing in autumn, and whether I hope to reap in winter? My answer will be, that I think very differently from most men of the time we have to pass and the business we have to do in this world. I think we have more of one and less of the other than is commonly supposed. Our want of time and the shortness of human life are some of the principal common-place complaints which we prefer against the established order of things; they are the grumblings of the vulgar, and the pathetic lamentations of the philosopher; but they are impertinent and impious in both. The man of business despises the man of pleasure for squandering his time away; the man of pleasure pities or laughs at the man of business for the same thing; and yet both concur superciliously and absurdly to find fault with the Supreme Being for having given them so little time. The philosopher, who misspends it very often as much as the others, joins in the same cry, and authorises this impiety. Theophrastus thought it extremely hard to die at ninety, and to go out of the world when he had just learned how to live in it. His master, Aristotle, found fault with nature for treating man in this respect worse than several other animals: both very unphilosophically; and I love Seneca the better for his quarrel

with the Stagyrite on this head. We see in so many instances a just proportion of things, according to their several relations to one another; that philosophy should lead us to conclude this proportion preserved, even where we cannot discern it, instead of leading us to conclude that it is not preserved where we do not discern it, or where we think that we see the contrary. To conclude otherwise is shocking presumption. It is to presume that the system of the universe would have been more wisely contrived if creatures of our low rank among intellectual natures had been called to the councils of the Most High; or that the Creator ought to mend His work by the advice of the creature. That life which seems to our self-love so short, when we compare it with the ideas we frame of eternity, or even with the duration of some other beings, will appear sufficient, upon a less partial view, to all the ends of our creation, and of a just proportion in the successive course of generations. The term itself is long; we render it short; and the want we complain of flows from our profusion, not from our poverty. We are all arrant spendthrifts; some of us dissipate our estates on the trifles, some on the superfluities; and then we all complain that we want the necessities of life. The much greatest part never reclaim, but die bankrupts to God and man. Others reclaim late, and they are apt to imagine, when they make up their accounts and see how their fund is diminished, that they have not enough remaining to live upon, because they have not the whole. But they deceive themselves; they were richer than they thought, and they are not yet poor. If they husband well the remainder, it will be found sufficient for all the necessities, and for some of the superfluities, and trifles too, perhaps, of life; but then the former order of expense must be inverted, and the necessities of life must be provided, before they put themselves to any cost for the trifles or superfluities.

Let us leave the men of pleasure and of business, who are often candid enough to own that they throw away their time, and thereby to confess that they complain of the Supreme Being for no other reason than this, that He has not proportioned His bounty to their extravagance; let us consider the scholar and the philosopher, who, far from owning that he throws any time away, reproves others for doing it; that solemn mortal who abstains from the pleasures, and declines the business of the world, that he may dedicate his whole time to the search of truth and the improvement of knowledge. When such a one complains of the shortness of human life in general, or of his remaining share in particular, might not a man, more reasonable though less solemn, expostulate thus with him?—

‘Your complaint is indeed consistent with your practice; but you would not possibly renew your complaint if you reviewed your practice. Though reading makes a scholar, yet every scholar is not a philosopher, nor every philosopher a wise man. It cost you twenty

the world. You have spent so much time
in this school, you have given you all the best
and most valuable knowledge. But if you have not thus
been able to realize the who, why, us yourself, on the least cool
of days, in your own mind, in your own heart, in your own soul,
you will not be able to produce knowledge; you will not be able to produce
truth. The knowledge you will receive, produce knowledge;
but it will not be knowledge of nature and facts you can have
but it will be knowledge very reasonably with many a

great scholar, many a profound philosopher, many a dogmatical casuist. And it serves to set the complaints about want of time and the shortness of human life, in a very ridiculous but a true light. All men are taught their opinions, at least on the most important subjects, by rote, and are bred to defend them with obstinacy. They might be taught true opinions; but whether true or false, the same zeal for them and the same attachment to them, is everywhere inspired alike. The Tartar believes as heartily that the soul of Foe inhabits in his Dairo as the Christian believes the hypostatic union or any article in the Athanasian creed. Now this may answer the ends of society in some respects, and do well enough for the vulgar of all ranks: but it is not enough for the man who cultivates his reason, who is able to think, and who ought to think for himself. To such a man, every opinion that he has not himself either framed, or examined strictly and then adopted, will pass for nothing more than what it really is, the opinion of other men; which may be true or false for aught he knows. And this is the state of uncertainty in which no such man can remain with any peace of mind, concerning those things that are of greatest importance to us here, and may be so hereafter. He will make them therefore the objects of his first and greatest attention. If he has lost time he will lose no more; and when he has acquired all the knowledge he is capable of acquiring on these subjects, he will be the less concerned whether he has time to acquire any further. Should he have passed his life in the pleasures or business of the world; whenever he sets about this work, he will soon have the advantage over the learned philosopher. For he will soon have secured what is necessary to his happiness, and may sit down in the peaceful enjoyment of that knowledge, or proceed with greater advantage and satisfaction to the acquisition of new knowledge; whilst the other continues his search after things that are in their nature, to say the best of them, hypothetical, and precarious, and superfluous.

But this is not the only rule, by observing of which we may redeem our time, and have the advantage over those who imagine they have so much in point of knowledge over your lordship or me, for instance, and who despise our ignorance. The rule I mean is this: to be on our guard against the common arts of delusion spoken of already; which, everyone is ready to confess, have been employed to mislead those who differ from him. Let us be diffident of ourselves, but let us be diffident of others too: our own passions may lead us to reason wrong; but the passions and interest of others may have the same effect. It is in every man's power, who sets about it in good earnest, to prevent the first; and when he has done so, he will have a conscious certainty of it. To prevent the last, there is one, and but one sure method; and that is, to remount, in the survey of our opinions, to the first and even remotest principles on which they are founded. No respect, no habit,

no seeming certainty whatever, must divert us from this; any affectation of diverting us from it ought to increase our suspicion; and the more important our examination is, the more important this method of conducting it becomes. Let us not be frightened from it, either by the supposed difficulty or length of such an inquiry; for, on the contrary, this is the easiest and the shortest, as well as the only sure way of arriving at real knowledge; and of being able to place the opinions we examine in the different classes of true, probable, or false, according to the truth, probability, or falsehood of the principles from whence they are deduced. If we find these principles false, and that will be the case in many instances, we stop our inquiries on these heads at once, and save an immense deal of time that we should otherwise misspend. The Mussulman who enters on the examination of all the disputes that have arisen between the followers of Omar and Ali and other doctors of his law, must acquire a thorough knowledge of the whole Mahometan system, and will have as good a right to complain of want of time, and the shortness of human life, as any pagan or Christian divine or philosopher: but without all this time and learning, he might have discovered that Mahomet was an impostor, and that the Koran is a heap of absurdities.

In short, my lord, he who retires from the world with a resolution of employing his leisure, in the first place to re-examine and settle his opinions, is inexcusable if he does not begin with those that are most important to him, and if he does not deal honestly by himself. To deal honestly by himself, he must observe the rule I have insisted upon, and not suffer the delusions of the world to follow him into his retreat. Every man's reason is every man's oracle: this oracle is best consulted in the silence of retirement, and when we have so consulted, whatever the decision be, whether in favour of our prejudices or against them, we must rest satisfied; since nothing can be more certain than this, that he who follows that guide in the search of truth, as that was given him to lead him to it, will have a much better plea to make whenever or wherever he may be called to account, than he who has resigned himself, deliberately or inadvertently, to any authority upon earth.

When we have done this, concerning God, ourselves, and other men, concerning the relations in which we stand to Him and to them; the duties that result from these relations, and the positive will of the Supreme Being, whether revealed to us in a supernatural, or discovered by the right use of our reason in a natural way—we have done the great business of our lives. Our lives are so sufficient for this, that they afford us time for more, even when we begin late; especially if we proceed in every other inquiry by the same rule. To discover error in axioms, or in first principles grounded on facts, is like the breaking of a charm. The enchanted castle, the steepy rock, the burning lake, disappear; and the paths that lead to truth, which we imagined to be so

long, so embarrassed, and so difficult, show as they are, short, open, and easy. When we have secured the necessaries, there may be time to amuse ourselves with the superfluities, and even with the trifles of life. ‘Dulce est desipere,’ said Horace: ‘Vive la bagatelle !’ says Swift. I oppose neither, not the Epicurean, much less the Christian philosopher; but I insist that a principal part of these amusements be the amusements of study and reflection, of reading and conversation. You know what conversation I mean, for we lose the true advantage of our nature and constitution if we suffer the mind to come, as it were, to a stand. When the body, instead of acquiring new vigour, and tasting new pleasures, begins to decline, and is sated with pleasures or grown incapable of taking them, the mind may continue still to improve and indulge itself in new enjoyments. Every advance in knowledge opens a new scene of delight, and the joy that we feel in the actual possession of one, will be heightened by that which we expect to find in another; so that, before we can exhaust this fund of successive pleasures, death will come to end our pleasures and our pains at once. ‘In his studiis laboribusque viventi, non intelligitur quando ‘obrepit senectus; ita sensim sine sensu ætas senescit, nec subito ‘frangitur, sed diuturnitate extinguitur.’

This, my lord, is the wisest and the most agreeable manner in which a man of sense can wind up the thread of life. Happy is he whose situation and circumstances give him the opportunity and means of doing it! Though he should not have made any great advances in knowledge, and should set about it late, yet the task will not be found difficult unless he has gone too far out of his way, and unless he continues too long to halt, between the dissipations of the world and the leisure of a retired life.

—*Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis,*—

You know the rest. I am sensible, more sensible than any enemy I have, of my natural infirmities and acquired disadvantages; but I have begun, and I will persist; for he who jogs forward on a battered horse in the right way, may get to the end of his journey, which he cannot do who gallops the fleetest courser of Newmarket out of it.

Adieu, my dear lord. Though I have much more to say on this subject, yet I perceive, and I doubt you have long perceived, that I have said too much, at least for a letter, already. The rest shall be reserved for conversation whenever we meet, and then I hope to confirm, under your lordship’s eye, my speculations by my practice. In the mean time let me refer you to our friend Pope. He says I made a philosopher of him; I am sure he has contributed very much, and I thank him for it, to the making a hermit of me.

BOLINGBROKE'S REFLECTIONS UPON EXILE¹

[ADVERTISEMENT.—*That the public may not be imposed upon by any lame and unequal translation of the following treatise, from the French, in which language part of it has been lately printed, and retailed in a monthly Mercury: it is judged proper to add it here, at the end of this second volume, from the author's original manuscript, as he himself had finished it for the press.*]

MDCCXVI.

DISSIPATION of mind and length of time are the remedies to which the greatest part of mankind trust in their afflictions. But the first of these works a temporary, the second a slow, effect; and both are unworthy of a wise man. Are we to fly from ourselves that we may fly from our misfortunes, and fondly to imagine that the disease is cured because we find means to get some moments of respite from pain? Or shall we expect from time, the physician of brutes, a lingering and uncertain deliverance? Shall we wait to be happy till we can forget that we are miserable, and owe to the weakness of our faculties a tranquillity which ought to be the effect of their strength? Far otherwise. Let us set all our past and our present afflictions at once before our eyes (Sen. De con. ad Hel.). Let us resolve to overcome them, instead of flying from them, or wearing out the sense of them by long and ignominious patience. Instead of palliating remedies, let us use the incision knife and the caustic, search the wound to the bottom, and work an immediate and radical cure.

The recalling of former misfortunes serves to fortify the mind against later. He must blush to sink under the anguish of one wound, who surveys a body seamed over with the scars of many, and who has come victorious out of all the conflicts wherein he received them. Let sighs, and tears, and fainting under the lightest strokes of adverse fortune, be the portion of those unhappy people whose tender minds a long course of felicity has enervated; while such, as have passed through years of calamity, bear up, with a noble and immoveable constancy, against the heaviest. Uninterrupted misery has this good effect, as it continually torments, it finally hardens.

¹ Several passages of this little treatise are taken from Seneca: and the whole is written with some allusion to his style and manner, 'Quanquam non omnino temere sit, quod de sententiis illius queritur Fabius,' etc.—ERAS., *De sen. jud.*

Such is the language of philosophy; and happy is the man who acquires the right of holding it. But this right is not to be acquired by pathetic discourse. Our conduct can alone give it us; and therefore, instead of presuming on our strength, the surest method is to confess our weakness, and, without loss of time, to apply ourselves to the study of wisdom. This was the advice which the oracle gave to Zeno (Diog. Laert.), and there is no other way of securing our tranquillity amidst all the accidents to which human life is exposed. Philosophy has, I know, her Thrasos, as well as war; and among her sons many there have been, who, while they aimed at being more than men, became something less. The means of preventing this danger are easy and sure. It is a good rule, to examine well before we addict ourselves to any sect; but I think it is a better rule, to addict ourselves to none. Let us hear them all, with a perfect indifference on which side the truth lies: and, when we come to determine, let nothing appear so venerable to us as our own understandings. Let us gratefully accept the help of every one who has endeavoured to correct the vices, and strengthen the minds of men; but let us choose for ourselves, and yield universal assent to none. Thus, that I may instance the sect already mentioned, when we have laid aside the wonderful and surprising sentences, and all the paradoxes of the Portic, we shall find in that school such doctrines as our unprejudiced reason submits to with pleasure, as nature dictates, and as experience confirms. Without this precaution, we run the risk of becoming imaginary kings, and real slaves. With it, we may learn to assert our native freedom, and may live independent on fortune.

In order to which great end, it is necessary that we stand watchful, as sentinels, to discover the secret wiles and open attacks of this capricious goddess, before they reach us (Sen. De con. ad Hel.). Where she falls upon us unexpected, it is hard to resist; but those who wait for her, will repel her with ease. The sudden invasion of an enemy overthrows such as are not on their guard; but they who foresee the war, and prepare themselves for it before it breaks out, stand, without difficulty, the first and the fiercest onset. I learned this important lesson long ago, and never trusted to fortune even while she seemed to be at peace with me. The riches, the honours, the reputation, and all the advantages which her treacherous indulgence poured upon me, I placed so that she might snatch them away without giving me any disturbance. I kept a great interval between me and them. She took them, but she could not tear them from me. No man suffers by bad fortune but he who has been deceived by good. If we grow fond of her gifts, fancy that they belong to us and are perpetually to remain with us, if we lean upon them, and expect to be considered for them: we shall sink into all the bitterness of grief, as soon as these false and transitory benefits pass away, as soon as our vain and childish

minds, unfraught with solid pleasures, become destitute even of those which are imaginary. But, if we do not suffer ourselves to be transported by prosperity, neither shall we be reduced by adversity. Our souls will be of proof against the dangers of both these states; and, having explored our strength, we shall be sure of it; for in the midst of felicity, we shall have tried how we can bear misfortune.

It is much harder to examine and judge, than to take up opinions on trust; and therefore the far greatest part of the world borrow from others, those which they entertain concerning all the affairs of life and death.¹ Hence it proceeds that men are so unanimously eager in the pursuit of things, which, far from having any inherent real good, are varnished over with a specious and deceitful gloss, and contain nothing answerable to their appearances (Sen. De con. ad Hel.). Hence it proceeds, on the other hand, that, in those things which are called evils, there is nothing so hard and terrible as the general cry of the world threatens. The word exile comes indeed harsh to the ear, and strikes us like a melancholy and execrable sound, through a certain persuasion which men have habitually concurred in. Thus the multitude has ordained. But the greatest part of their ordinances have been abrogated by the wise.

Rejecting therefore the judgment of those who determine according to popular opinions, or the first appearances of things, let us examine what exile really is (Sen. De con. ad Hel.). It is, then, a change of place; and, lest you should say that I diminish the object, and conceal the most shocking parts of it, I add, that this change of place is frequently accompanied by some or all of the following inconveniences: by the loss of the estate which we enjoyed, and the rank which we held; by the loss of that consideration and power which we were in possession of; by a separation from our family and our friends; by the contempt which we may fall into; by the ignominy with which those who have driven us abroad, will endeavour to sully the innocence of our characters, and justify the injustice of their conduct.

All these shall be spoke to hereafter. In the meanwhile, let us consider what evil there is in change of place, abstractedly, by itself.

To live deprived of one's country, is intolerable (Sen. De con. ad Hel.). Is it so? How comes it then to pass that such numbers of men live out of their countries by choice? Observe how the streets of London and of Paris are crowded. Call over those millions by name, and ask them one by one, of what country they are; how many will you find, who, from different parts of the earth, come to inhabit these great cities, which afford the largest opportunities, and the largest encouragement, to virtue and to vice? Some are drawn by ambition, and some are sent by duty; many resort thither to improve their minds,

¹ Dum unusquisque mavult credere, quam judicare, nunquam de vita judicatur, semper creditur.—SEN., *De vita beat.*

and many to improve their fortunes; others bring their beauty, and others their eloquence, to market. Remove from hence, and go to the utmost extremities of the east or the west; visit the barbarous nations of Africa, or the inhospitable regions of the North; you will find no climate so bad, no country so savage, as not to have some people who come from abroad, and inhabit there by choice.

Among numberless extravagancies which have passed through the minds of men, we may justly reckon for one that notion of a secret affection, independent of our reason, and superior to our reason, which we are supposed to have for our country; as if there were some physical virtue in every spot of ground, which necessarily produced this effect in every one born upon it.

‘—Amor patriæ ratione valentior omni.’—(Ov. De Ponto, el. iv.)

As if the heimvei was an universal distemper, inseparable from the constitution of an human body, and not peculiar to the Swiss, who seem to have been made for their mountains, as their mountains seem to have been made for them (Card. Bent. Let.). This notion may have contributed to the security and grandeur of States. It has therefore been not unartfully cultivated, and the prejudice of education has been with care put on its side. Men have come in this case, as in many, from believing that it ought to be so, to persuade others, and even to believe themselves, that it is so. Procopius relates that Abgarus came to Rome, and gained the esteem and friendship of Augustus to such a degree, that this emperor could not resolve to let him return home; that Abgarus brought several beasts, which he had taken one day in hunting, alive to Augustus; that he placed in different parts of the circus some of the earth which belonged to the places where each of these animals had been caught; that as soon as this was done, and they were turned loose, every one of them ran to that corner where his earth lay; that Augustus, admiring their sentiment of love for their country which nature has graved in the hearts of beasts, and struck by the evidence of the truth, granted the request which Abgarus immediately pressed upon him, and allowed, though with regret, the tetrarch to return to Edessa. But this tale deserves just as much credit as that which follows in the same place, of the letter of Abgarus to Jesus Christ, of our Saviour's answer, and of the cure of Abgarus. There is nothing, surely, more groundless than the notion here advanced, nothing more absurd. We love the country in which we are born, because we receive particular benefits from it, and because we have particular obligations to it; which ties we may have to another country, as well as to that we are born in; to our country by election, as well as to our country by birth. In all other respects, a wise man looks on himself as a citizen of the world; and, when you ask him where his country lies, points, like Anaxagoras, with his finger to the heavens.

There are other persons, again, who have imagined that as the whole universe suffers a continual rotation, and nature seems to delight in it, or to preserve herself by it, so there is in the minds of men a natural restlessness, which inclines them to change of place, and to the shifting their habitations (Sen. *De con. ad Hel.*). This opinion has at least an appearance of truth, which the other wants; and is countenanced, as the other is contradicted, by experience. But, whatever the reasons be, which must have varied infinitely in an infinite number of cases and an immense space of time, true it is in fact, that the families and nations of the world have been in a continual fluctuation, roaming about on the face of the globe, driving and driven out by turns. What a number of colonies has Asia sent into Europe! The Phœnicians planted the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, and pushed their settlements even into the ocean. The Etrurians were of Asiatic extraction; and, to mention no more, the Romans, those lords of the world, acknowledged a Trojan exile for the founder of their empire. How many migrations have there been, in return to these, from Europe into Asia? They would be endless to enumerate; for, besides the Aeolic, the Ionic, and others of almost equal fame, the Greeks, during several ages, made continual expeditions, and built cities in several parts of Asia. The Gauls penetrated thither too, and established a kingdom. The European Scythians overran these vast provinces, and carried their arms to the confines of Egypt. Alexander subdued all from the Hellespont to India, and built towns, and established colonies, to secure his conquests, and to eternise his name. From both these parts of the world, Africa has received inhabitants and masters; and what she has received she has given. The Tyrians built the city, and founded the republic of Carthage; and Greek has been the language of Egypt. In the remotest antiquity we hear of Belus in Chaldæa, and of Sesostris planting his tawny colonies in Colchos; and Spain has been, in these later ages, under the dominion of the Moors. If we turn to Runic history, we find our fathers, the Goths, led by Woden and by Thor, their heroes first and their divinities afterwards, from the Asiatic Tartary into Europe; and who can assure us that this was their first migration? They came into Asia perhaps by the east, from that continent to which their sons have lately sailed from Europe by the west; and thus, in the process of three or four thousand years, the same race of men have pushed their conquests and their habitations round the globe; at least this may be supposed, as reasonably as it is supposed, I think by Grotius, that America was peopled from Scandinavia. The world is a great wilderness, wherein mankind have wandered and jostled one another about from the creation. Some have removed by necessity, and others by choice. One nation has been fond of seizing what another was tired of possessing; and it will be difficult to point out the country which is to this day in the hands of its first inhabitants.

Thus fate has ordained that nothing shall remain long in the same state; and what are all these transports of people, but so many public exiles? Varro, the most learned of the Romans, thought, since nature (Sen. De con. ad Hel.) is the same wherever we go, that this single circumstance was sufficient to remove all objections to change of place, taken by itself, and stripped of the other inconveniences which attend exile. M. Brutus thought it enough that those who go into banishment cannot be hindered from carrying their virtue along with them. Now, if any one judge that each of these comforts is in itself insufficient, he must however confess that both of them joined together are able to remove the terrors of exile. For what trifles must all we leave behind us be esteemed, in comparison of the two most precious things which men can enjoy, and which, we are sure, will follow us wherever we turn our steps, the same nature, and our proper virtue. Believe me, the providence of God has established such an order in the world, that of all which belongs to us the least valuable parts can alone fall under the will of others. Whatever is best is safest; lies out of the reach of human power; can neither be given nor taken away. Such is this great and beautiful work of nature, the world. Such is the mind of man, which contemplates and admires the world whereof it makes the noblest part. These are inseparably ours, and as long as we remain in one we shall enjoy the other. Let us march therefore intrepidly wherever we are led by the course of human accidents. Wherever they lead us, on what coast soever we are thrown by them, we shall not find ourselves absolutely strangers. We shall meet with men and women, creatures of the same figure, endowed with the same faculties, and born under the same laws of nature. We shall see the same virtues and vices, flowing from the same general principles, but varied in a thousand different and contrary modes, according to that infinite variety of laws and customs which is established for the same universal end, the preservation of society. We shall feel the same revolution of seasons, and the same sun and moon¹ will guide the course of our year. The same azure vault, bespangled with stars, will be everywhere spread over our heads. There is no part of the world from whence we may not admire those planets which roll, like ours, in different orbits round the same central sun; from whence we may not discover an object still more stupendous, that army of fixed stars hung up in the immense space of the universe, innumerable suns whose beams enlighten and cherish the unknown worlds which roll around them; and whilst I am ravished by such contemplations as these, whilst my soul is thus raised up to heaven, it imports me little what may be the ground I tread upon.

¹ PLUT. Of banishment. He compares those who cannot live out of their own country, to the simple people who fancied that the moon of Athens was a finer moon than that of Corinth.

'—labentem caelo quæ ducitis annum.'—VIR. GEO.

Brutus (*Sen. De'con. ad Hel.*), in the book which he wrote on virtue, related that he had seen Marcellus in exile at Mytilene, living in all the happiness which human nature is capable of, and cultivating, with as much assiduity as ever, all kinds of laudable knowledge. He added that this spectacle made him think that it was rather he who went into banishment, since he was to return without the other, than the other who remained in it. O Marcellus, far more happy when Brutus approved thy exile, than when the commonwealth approved thy consulship! How great a man must thou have been, to extort admiration from him who appeared an object of admiration even to his own Cato! The same Brutus reported further, that Cæsar overshot Mytilene, because he could not stand the sight of Marcellus reduced to a state so unworthy of him. His restoration was at length obtained by the public intercession of the whole senate, who were dejected with grief to such a degree, that they seemed all upon this occasion to have the same sentiments with Brutus, and to be suppliants for themselves, rather than for Marcellus.¹ This was to return with honour; but surely he remained abroad with greater, when Brutus could not resolve to leave him, nor Cæsar to see him; for both of them bore witness of his merit. Brutus grieved, and Cæsar blushed to go to Rome without their friend.

Q. Metellus Numidicus had undergone the same fate some years before, while the people, who are always the surest instruments of their own servitude, were laying, under the conduct of Marius, the foundations of that tyranny which was perfected by Cæsar. Metellus alone, in the midst of an intimidated senate and outrageous multitude, refused to swear to the pernicious laws of the tribune Saturninus. His constancy became his crime, and exile his punishment. A wild and lawless faction prevailing against him, the best men of the city armed in his defence, and were ready to lay down their lives that they might preserve so much virtue to their country. But he, having failed to persuade, thought it not lawful to constrain. He judged in the frensy of the Roman commonwealth, as Plato judged in the dotage of the Athenian. Metellus knew that if his fellow-citizens amended, he should be recalled; and if they did not amend, he thought he could be nowhere worse than at Rome. He went voluntarily into exile, and wherever he passed he carried the sure symptom of a sickly state, and the certain prognostic of an expiring commonwealth. What temper he continued in abroad will best appear by a fragment of one of his letters which Gellius (*Lib. xvii. cap. 2*), in a pedantic compilation of phrases used by the annalist Q. Claudio, has preserved for the sake of the word fruniscor. ‘Illi vero omni jure atque honestate

¹ Marcellus was assassinated at Athens in his return home, by Chilo, an old friend and fellow-soldier of his. The motive of Chilo is not explained in history. Cæsar was suspected, but he seems to be justified by the opinion of Brutus.

'interdicti: ego neque aqua neque igne careo: et summa gloria fruniscor.' Happy Metellus! happy in the conscience of thy own virtue! happy in thy pious son, and in that excellent friend who resembled thee in merit and in fortune!

Rutilius had defended Asia against the extortions of the publicans, according to the strict justice of which he made profession, and to the particular duty of his office. The equestrian order were upon this account his enemies, and the Marian faction was so of course, on account of his probity, as well as out of hatred to Metellus. The most innocent man of the city was accused of corruption. The best man was prosecuted by the worst, by Apicius; a name dedicated to infamy.¹ Those who had stirred up the false accusation sat as judges, and pronounced the unjust sentence against him. He hardly deigned to defend his cause, but retired into the east, where that Roman virtue, which Rome could not bear, was received with honour (Sen. L. De prov. cap. iii.). Shall Rutilius now be deemed unhappy, when they who condemned him are, for that action, delivered down as criminals to all future generations? when he quitted his country with greater ease than he would suffer his exile to finish? when he alone durst refuse the dictator Sylla, and being recalled home, not only declined to go, but fled farther off?

What do you propose, it may be said, by these examples, multitudes of which are to be collected from the memorials of former ages? I propose to show that as change of place, simply considered, can render no man unhappy, so the other evils which are objected to exile, either cannot happen to wise and virtuous men; or, if they do happen to them, cannot render them miserable. Stones are hard, and cakes of ice are cold; and all who feel them, feel them alike (Plut. On exile). But the good or the bad events, which fortune brings upon us, are felt according to what qualities we, not they, have. They are in themselves indifferent and common accidents, and they acquire strength by nothing but our vice or our weakness. Fortune can dispense neither felicity nor infelicity unless we co-operate with her. Few men who are unhappy under the loss of an estate would be happy in the possession of it; and those who deserve to enjoy the advantages which exile takes away will not be unhappy when they are deprived of them.

It grieves me to make an exception to this rule; but Tully was one so remarkably, that the example can be neither concealed, nor passed over. This great man, who had been the saviour of his country, who had feared, in the support of that cause, neither the insults of a desperate party, nor the daggers of assassins, when he came to suffer for the same cause, sunk under the weight. He dishonoured that

¹ There was another Apicius, in the reign of Tiberius, famous for his gluttony, and a third in the time of Trajan.

banishment which indulgent providence meant to be the means of rendering his glory complete. Uncertain where he should go, or what he should do, fearful as a woman, and foward as a child, he lamented the loss of his rank, of his riches, and of his splendid popularity. His eloquence served only to paint his ignominy in stronger colours. He wept over the ruins of his fine house which Clodius had demolished; and his separation from Terentia, whom he repudiated not long afterwards, was perhaps an affliction to him at this time. Everything becomes intolerable to the man who is once subdued by grief.¹ He regrets what he took no pleasure in enjoying, and, overloaded already, he shrinks at the weight of a feather. Cicero's behaviour, in short, was such that his friends, as well as his enemies, believed him to have lost his senses.² Cæsar beheld, with a secret satisfaction, the man, who had refused to be his lieutenant, weeping under the rod of Clodius. Pompey hoped to find some excuse for his own ingratitude in the contempt which the friend, whom he had abandoned, exposed himself to. Nay Atticus judged him too meanly attached to his former fortune, and reproached him for it. Atticus, whose great talents were usury and trimming, who placed his principal merit in being rich, and who would have been noted with infamy at Athens, for keeping well with all sides, and venturing on none (*Plutarchus Vita Solon.*); even Atticus blushed for Tully, and the most plausible man alive assumed the style of Cato.

I have dwelt the longer on this instance, because, whilst it takes nothing from the truth which has been established, it teaches us another of great importance. Wise men are certainly superior to all the evils of exile. But in a strict sense he who has left any one passion in his soul unsubdued will not deserve that appellation. It is not enough that we have studied all the duties of public and private life, that we are perfectly acquainted with them, and that we live up to them in the eye of the world. A passion that lies dormant in the heart, and has escaped our scrutiny, or which we have observed and indulged as venial, or which we have perhaps encouraged, as a principle to excite and to aid our virtue, may one time or other destroy our tranquillity, and disgrace our whole character. When virtue has steeled the mind on every side, we are invulnerable on every side; but Achilles was wounded in the heel. The least part, overlooked or neglected, may expose us to receive a mortal blow. Reason cannot obtain the absolute dominion of our souls by one victory. Vice has many reserves which must be beaten; many strongholds which must be forced; and we may be found of proof in many trials, without being so in all. We may resist the severest, and yield to the weakest attacks of fortune. We may have got the better of avarice, the most

¹ Mitto cætera intolerabilia. Etenim fletu impediōr.—*L. iii. Ad. Attic. ep. 10.*

² Tam saepe, et tam vehementer objurgas, et animo infimo esse dicis.—*Ibid.*

epidemical disease of the mind, and yet be slaves to ambition.¹ We may have purged our souls of the fear of death, and yet some other fear may venture to lurk behind. This was the case of Cicero. Vanity was his cardinal vice.² It had, I question not, warmed his zeal, quickened his industry, animated the love of his country, and supported his constancy against Catiline; but it gave to Clodius an entire victory over him. He was not afraid to die, and part with estate, rank, honour, and everything which he lamented the loss of; but he was afraid to live deprived of them. ‘*Ut vivus hæc amitterem.*³’ He would probably have met death on this occasion with the same firmness with which he said to Popilius Lænas, his client and his murderer, ‘Approach veteran, and, if at least thou canst do this well, ‘cut off my head.’ But he could not bear to see himself, and to be seen by others, stripped of those trappings which he was accustomed to wear. This made him break out into so many shameful expressions. ‘*Possum oblivisci qui fuerim? non sentire qui sim? quo caream honore? quâ gloriâ?*’ And speaking of his brother—‘*Vitavi ne viderem; ne aut illius luctum squaloremque aspicerim, aut me quem ille florentissimum reliquerat perditum illi afflictumque offerrem.*’ He had thought of death, and prepared his mind for it. There were occasions too where his vanity might be flattered by it. But the same vanity hindered him in his prosperous estate from supposing such a reverse as afterwards happened to him. When it came, it found him unprepared, it surprised him, it stunned him; for he was still fond of the pomp and hurry of Rome, ‘*fumum, et opes, strepitumque Romæ,*’ and unweaned from all those things which habit renders necessary, and which nature has left indifferent.

We have enumerated them above, and it is time to descend into a more particular examination of them. Change of place, then, may be borne by every man. It is the delight of many. But who can bear the evils which accompany exile? you who ask the question can bear them. Every one who considers them as they are in themselves, instead of looking at them through the false optic which prejudice holds before our eyes. For what? you have lost your estate; reduce your desires, and you will perceive yourself to be as rich as ever, with this considerable advantage to boot, that your cares will be diminished.⁴ Our

¹ Seneca says the contrary of all this, according to the Stoical system, which however he departs from on many occasions. ‘*Si contra unam quamlibet partem fortunæ satis tibi roboris est, idem aduersus omnes erit.—Si avaritia dimisit, vehementissima generis humani pestis, moram tibi ambitio non faciet. Si ultimum diem,*’ etc.—*De Con. ad Hel.* ‘*Non singula vitia ratio, sed pariter omnia prosternit. In universum semel vincitur.*’—*Ibid.* ‘*Nec audacem quidem timoris absolvinus: ne prodigum quidem avaritiâ liberamus.*’—*De Benef.*, lib. iv., cap. 27. ‘*Qui autem habet vitium unum, habet omnia.*’—*Ibid.*, lib. v., cap. 25.

² ‘*In animo autem gloriæ cupido, qualis fuit Ciceronis, plurimum potest.*’—*Vet. Pat.*, lib. i.

³ *Ep. ad Attic.*, lib. iii., ep. 3, 7, 10, et passim. Lib. iii. ep. 10, ad Attic.

⁴ ‘*Naturalia desideria finita sunt: ex falsâ opinione nascentia ubi desinant non habent, nullus enim terminus falso est.*’—*SEN. Ep. 16. Excerp. ex Lib. Sen.*, falsely so called.

natural and real wants are confined to narrow bounds, whilst those which fancy and custom create are confined to none. Truth lies within a little and certain compass, but error is immense. If we suffer our desires, therefore, to wander beyond these bounds, they wander eternally. ‘Nescio quid curiae semper abest rei.’ We become necessitous in the midst of plenty, and our poverty increases with our riches. Reduce your desires; be able to say with the apostle of Greece, to whom Erasmus was ready to address his prayers, ‘Quam multis ipse ‘non egeo!’ banish out of your exile all imaginary, and you will suffer no real wants. The little stream which is left will suffice to quench the thirst of nature, and that which cannot be quenched by it is not your thirst but your distemper—a distemper formed by the vicious habits of your mind, and not the effect of exile. How great a part of mankind bear poverty with cheerfulness, because they have been bred in it and are accustomed to it? (Sen. de Con. ad Hel.) Shall we not be able to acquire, by reason and by reflection, what the meanest artisan possesses by habit? Shall those who have so many advantages over him be slaves to wants and necessities of which he is ignorant? The rich whose wanton appetites neither the produce of one country nor of one part of the world can satisfy, for whom the whole habitable globe is ransacked, for whom the caravans of the east are continually in march, and the remotest seas are covered with ships; these pampered creatures, sated with superfluity, are often glad to inhabit a humble cot, and to make a homely meal. They run for refuge into the arms of frugality. Madmen that they are to live always in fear of what they sometimes wish for, and to fly from that life which they find it luxury to imitate! Let us cast our eyes backwards on those great men who lived in the ages of virtue, of simplicity, of frugality, and let us blush to think that we enjoy in banishment more than they were masters of in the midst of their glory, in the utmost affluence of their fortune. Let us imagine that we behold a great dictator giving audience to the Samnite ambassadors, and preparing on the hearth his mean repast with the same hand which had so often subdued the enemies of the commonwealth, and borne the triumphant laurel to the capital. Let us remember that Plato had but¹ three servants, and that Zeno had none.² Socrates, the reformer of his country, was maintained, as

‘Si ad naturam vives, nunquam eris pauper; si ad opinionem, nunquam dives. Exiguum ‘natura desiderat, opinio immensum.’—SEN., E.P. 16.

¹ Plato's will, in Diog. Laer. mentions four servants, besides Diana, to whom he gave her freedom. Apuleius makes his estate consist in a little garden near the academy, two servants, a patten for sacrifices, and as much gold as would serve to make ear-rings for a child.

² Zeno was owner of a thousand talents when he came from Cyprus into Greece, and he used to lend his money out upon ships at a high interest. He kept, in short, a kind of insurance office. He lost this estate perhaps when he said, ‘Recte sanè agit fortuna, quæ nos ad philosophiam impellit.’ Afterwards he received many and great presents from Antigonus. So that his great frugality and simplicity of life, was the effect of his choice, and not of necessity. *Vid. Diog. Laer.*

Menenius Agrippa, the arbiter of his country, was buried, by contribution.¹ While Attilius Regulus beat the Carthaginians in Africa, the flight of his ploughmen reduced his family to distress at home, and the tillage of his little farm became the public care. Scipio died without leaving enough to marry his daughters, and their portions were paid out of the treasury of the state; for sure it was just that the people of Rome should once pay tribute to him who had established a perpetual tribute on Carthage. After such examples shall we be afraid of poverty? shall we disdain to be adopted into a family which has so many illustrious ancestors? shall we complain of banishment for taking from us what the greatest philosophers and the greatest heroes of antiquity never enjoyed?

You will find fault, perhaps, and attribute to artifice, that I consider singly misfortunes which come all together on the banished man, and overbear him with their united weight. You could support change of place if it was not accompanied with poverty, or poverty if it was not accompanied with the separation from your family and your friends, with the loss of your rank, consideration, and power, with contempt and ignominy. Whoever he be who reasons in this manner, let him take the following answer. 'The least of these circumstances is singly sufficient to render the man miserable who is not prepared for it, who has not divested himself of that passion upon which it is directed to work. But he who has got the mastery of all his passions, who has foreseen all these accidents, and prepared his mind to endure them all, will be superior to all of them, and to all of them at once as well as singly. He will not bear the loss of his rank, because he can bear the loss of his estate; but he will bear both, because he is prepared for both; because he is free from pride as much as from avarice.'

You are separated from your family and your friends. Take the list of them, and look it well over. How few of your family will you find who deserve the name of friends? and how few among these who are really such? Erase the names of such as ought not to stand on the roll, and the voluminous catalogue will soon dwindle into a narrow compass. Regret, if you please, your separation from this small remnant. Far be it from me, whilst I declaim against a shameful and vicious weakness of mind, to proscribe the sentiments of a virtuous friendship. Regret your separation from your friends, but regret it like a man who deserves to be theirs. This is strength, not weakness of mind; it is virtue, not vice.

But the least uneasiness under the loss of the rank which we held is ignominious. There is no valuable rank among men but that which real merit assigns. The princes of the earth may give names, and

¹ DIOG. LAER. *vit. Soc.* quotes Aristoxenus for affirming that Socrates used to keep a box, and lived upon the money which was put into it: 'Positâ igitur arcuâ, colligisse pecuniam quæ daretur; consumptâ autem eâ, rursus posuisse.'

institute ceremonies, and exact the observation of them; their imbecility and their wickedness may prompt them to clothe fools and knaves with robes of honour, and emblems of wisdom and virtue; but no man will be in truth superior to another without superior merit;¹ and that rank can no more be taken from us than the merit which establishes it. The supreme authority gives a fictitious and arbitrary value to coin, which is therefore not current alike in all times and in all places; but the real value remains invariable, and the provident man, who gets rid as fast as he can of the drossy pieces, hoards up the good silver. Thus merit will not procure the same consideration universally. But what then? the title to this consideration is the same, and will be found alike in every circumstance by those who are wise and virtuous themselves. If it is not owned by such as are otherwise, nothing is, however, taken from us; we have no reason to complain. They considered us for a rank which we had; for our denomination, not for our intrinsic value. We have that rank, that denomination, no longer, and they consider us no longer; they admired in us what we admired not in ourselves. If they learn to neglect us, let us learn to pity them. Their assiduity was importunate; let us not complain of the ease which this change procures us; let us rather apprehend the return of that rank and that power which, like a sunny day, would bring back these little insects, and make them swarm once more about us. I know how apt we are, under specious pretences, to disguise our weaknesses and our vices, and how often we succeed, not only in deceiving the world, but even in deceiving ourselves. An inclination to do good is inseparable from a virtuous mind; and therefore the man who cannot bear with patience the loss of that rank and power which he enjoyed, may be willing to attribute his regrets to the impossibility which he supposes himself reduced to of satisfying this inclination. But let such a one know, that a wise man contents himself with doing as much good as his situation allows him to do; that there is no situation wherein we may not do a great deal; and that when we are deprived of greater power to do more good, we escape at the same time the temptation of doing some evil.

The inconveniences which we have mentioned, carry nothing along with them difficult to be borne by a wise and virtuous man; and those which remain to be mentioned, contempt and ignominy, can never fall to his lot. It is impossible that he who reverences himself should be despised by others; and how can ignominy affect the man who collects all his strength within himself, who appeals from the judgment of the multitude to another tribunal, and lives independent of the accidents of life? Cato lost the election of prætor, and that of consul; but can any one imagine that these repulses reflected any disgrace on him? The dignity of those two magistracies would have been increased by his wearing them. They suffered, not Cato.

¹ Rank is but the guinea stamp—‘A man’s a man for a’ that.’—BURNS.

You have fulfilled all the duties of a good citizen, you have been true to your trust, constant in your engagements, and have pursued the interest of your country without regard to the enemies you created and the dangers you ran. You severed her interest as much as lay in your power from those of her factions, and from those of her neighbours and allies too, when they became different. She reaps the benefit of these services, and you suffer for them. You are banished and pursued with ignominy, and those whom you hindered from triumphing at her expense revenge themselves at yours. The persons, in opposition to whom you served, or even saved the public, conspire and accomplish your private ruin. These are your accusers, and the giddy ungrateful crowd your judges. Your name is hung up in the tables of proscription, and art joined to malice endeavours to make your best actions pass for crimes, and to stain your character. For this purpose the sacred voice of the senate is made to pronounce a lie, and those records, which ought to be the eternal monuments of truth, become the vouchers of imposture and calumny. Such circumstances as these you think intolerable, and you would prefer death to so ignominious an exile. Deceive not yourself. The ignominy remains with them who persecute unjustly, not with him who suffers unjust persecution. 'Recalcitrat *'undique tutus.'* Suppose that in the act which banishes you, it was declared that you have some contagious distemper, that you are crooked, or otherwise deformed. This would render the legislators ridiculous.¹ The other renders them infamous. But neither one nor the other can affect the man who, in a healthful well-proportioned body, enjoys a conscience void of all the offences ascribed to him. Instead of such an exile, would you compound, that you might live at home in ease and plenty, to be the instrument of blending these contrary interests once more together, and of giving but the third place to that of your country? Would you prostitute her power to the ambition of others, under the pretence of securing her from imaginary dangers, and drain her riches into the pockets of the meanest and vilest of her citizens, under the pretence of paying her debts? If you could submit to so infamous a composition, you are not the man to whom I address my discourse, or with whom I will have any commerce, and if you have virtue enough to disdain it, why should you repine at the other alternative? Banishment from such a country, and with such circumstances, is like being delivered from prison. Diogenes was driven out of the kingdom of Pontus for counterfeiting the coin, and Stratonicus thought that forgery might be committed in order to get banished from Scriphos. But you have obtained your liberty by doing your duty.

Banishment, with all its train of evils, is so far from being the cause of contempt, that he who bears up with an undaunted spirit against

¹ The dialogue between Cicero and Philiscus, *Dion. Cass.*, lib. 38.

them, while so many are dejected by them, erects on his very misfortunes a trophy to his honour ; for such is the frame and temper of our minds, that nothing strikes us with greater admiration than a man intrepid in the midst of misfortunes. Of all ignominies an ignominious death must be allowed to be the greatest, and yet where is the blasphemer who will presume to defame the death of Socrates ? (Sen. de Con. ad Hel.) This saint entered the prison with the same countenance with which he reduced thirty tyrants, and he took off ignominy from the place ; for how could it be deemed a prison when Socrates was there ? Aristides was led to execution in the same city ; all those who met the sad procession cast their eyes to the ground, and with throbbing hearts bewailed, not the innocent man, but justice herself, who was in him condemned. Yet there was a wretch found, for monsters are sometimes produced in contradiction to the ordinary rules of nature, who spit in his face as he passed along. Aristides wiped his cheek, smiled, turned to the magistrate, and said, ‘Admonish this man not to be so ‘nasty for the future.’

Ignominy then can take no hold on virtue (Sen. de Con. ad Hel.), for virtue is in every condition the same, and challenges the same respect. We applaud the world when she prospers ; and when she falls into adversity we applaud her. Like the temples of the gods, she is venerable even in her ruins. After this must it not appear a degree of madness to defer one moment acquiring the only arms capable of defending us against attacks, which at every moment we are exposed to ? Our being miserable or not miserable, when we fall into misfortunes, depends on the manner in which we have enjoyed prosperity. If we have applied ourselves betimes to the study of wisdom and to the practice of virtue, these evils become indifferent ; but if we have neglected to do so, they become necessary. In one case they are evils in the other they are remedies for greater evils than themselves. Zeno (Diog. Laer.) rejoiced that a shipwreck had thrown him on the Athenian coast, and he owed to the loss of his fortune the acquisition which he made of virtue, of wisdom, of immortality. There are good and bad airs for the mind as well as for the body. Prosperity often irritates our chronical distempers, and leaves no hopes of finding any specific but in adversity. In such cases banishment is like change of air, and the evils we suffer are like rough medicines applied to inveterate diseases. What Anacharsis (Seneca.) said of the vine may aptly enough be said of prosperity,—She bears the three grapes of drunkenness, of pleasure, and of sorrow, and happy it is if the last can cure the mischief which the former work. When afflictions fail to have their due effect, the case is desperate. They are the last remedy which indulgent Providence uses, and if they fail, we must languish and die in misery and contempt. Vain men ! how seldom do we know what to wish or to pray for ? When we pray against misfortunes, and when we

fear them most, we want them most. It was for this reason that Pythagoras forbid his disciples to ask anything in particular of God. The best prayer which we can address to Him who knows our wants, and our ignorance in asking, is this, ‘Thy will be done.’

Tully says, in some part of his works, that, as happiness is the object of all philosophy, so the disputes among philosophers arise from their different notions of the sovereign good. Reconcile them in that point, you reconcile them in the rest. The school of Zeno placed this sovereign good in naked virtue, and wound the principle up to an extreme beyond the pitch of nature and truth. A spirit of opposition to another doctrine, which grew into great vogue while Zeno flourished, might occasion this excess. Epicurus placed the sovereign good in pleasure. His terms were wilfully or accidentally mistaken. His scholars might help to pervert his doctrine, but rivalry inflamed the dispute; for in truth there is not so much difference between stoicism reduced to reasonable intelligible terms, and genuine orthodox epicurism, as is imagined. The ‘fælicis animi immota tranquillitas,’ and the ‘voluptas’ of the latter are near enough akin; and I much doubt whether the firmest hero of the Portic would have borne a fit of the stone on the principles of Zeno, with greater magnanimity and patience than Epicurus did on those of his own philosophy. However,¹ Aristotle took a middle way, or explained himself better, and placed happiness in the joint advantages of the mind, of the body, and of fortune. They are reasonably joined; but certain it is, that they must not be placed on an equal foot. We can much better bear the privation of the last than of the others; and poverty itself, which mankind is so afraid of, ‘per mare pauperiem fugens, per saxa, per ignes,’ is surely preferable to madness or the stone, though Chrysippus² thought it better to live mad, than not to live! If banishment, therefore, by taking from us the advantages of fortune, cannot take from us the more valuable advantages of the mind and the body, when we have them; and if the same accident is able to restore them to us, when we have lost them, banishment is a very slight misfortune to those who are already under the dominion of reason, and a very great blessing to those who are still plunged in vices which ruin the health both of body and mind. It is to be wished for, in favour of such as these, and to be feared by none. If we are in this case, let us second the designs of Providence in our favour, and make some amends for neglecting former opportunities by not letting slip the last. ‘Si nolis sanus, ‘curres hydroicus.’ We may shorten the evils which we might have prevented, and as we get the better of our disorderly passions, and

¹ Compare the representations made so frequently of the doctrine of voluntary taught by Epicurus, with the account which he himself gives in his letter to Menoeceus, of the sense wherein he understood this word. *Vid. Diog. Laer.*

² In his third book of nature, cited by Plutarch, in the treatise on the contradictions of the Stoicks.

vicious habits, we shall feel our anxiety diminish in proportion. All the approaches to virtue are comfortable. With how much joy will the man, who improves his misfortunes in this manner, discover that those evils, which he attributed to his exile, sprung from his vanity and folly, and vanish with them? He will see that, in his former temper of mind he resembled the effeminate prince who could drink no (*Plut. on Banishment.*) water but that of the river Choaspes; or the simple queen, in one of the tragedies of Euripides, who complained bitterly, that she had not lighted the nuptial torch, and that the river Ismenus had not furnished the water at her son's wedding. Seeing his former state in this ridiculous light, he will labour on with pleasure towards another as contrary as possible to it; and when he arrives there, he will be convinced by the strongest of all proofs, his own experience, that he was unfortunate because he was vicious, and not because he was banished.

If I was not afraid of being thought to refine too much, I would venture to put some advantages of fortune, which are due to exile, into the scale against those which we lose by exile. One there is which has been neglected even by great and wise men. Demetrius Phalereus after his expulsion from Athens, became first minister to the King of Egypt; and Themistocles found such a reception at the court of Persia, that he used to say his fortune had been lost if he had not been ruined. But Demetrius exposed himself by his favour under the first Ptolemy to a new disgrace under the second; and Themistocles, who had been the captain of a free people, became the vassal of the prince he had conquered. How much better is it to take hold of the proper advantage of exile, and to live for ourselves, when we are under no obligation of living for others? Similis, a captain of great reputation under Trajan and Adrian, having obtained leave to retire, passed seven years in his retreat, and then dying, ordered this inscription to be put on his tomb; that he had been many years on earth (*Xiphil.*), but that he had lived only seven. If you are wise, your leisure will be worthily employed, and your retreat will add new lustre to your character. Imitate Thucydides in Thracia, or Xenophon in his little farm at Scillus. In such a retreat you may sit down, like one of the inhabitants of Elis, who judged of the Olympic games without taking any part in them. Far from the hurry of the world, and almost an unconcerned spectator of what passes in it, having payed in a public life what you owed to the present age, pay in a private life what you owe to posterity. Write, as you live, without passion; and build your reputation, as you build your happiness, on the foundations of truth. If you want the talents, the inclination, or the necessary materials for such a work, fall not however into sloth. Endeavour to copy after the example of Scipio at Linternum. Be able to say to yourself, 'Innocuas anno delicias doctamque quietem.'

Rural amusements and philosophical meditations will make your hours glide smoothly on ; and if the indulgence of Heaven has given you a friend like Lelius, nothing is wanting to make you happy.

These are some of those reflections which may serve to fortify the mind under banishment, and under the other misfortunes of life, which it is every man's interest to prepare for, because they are common to all men (Sen. Ep. 107.) ; I say they are common to all men, because even they who escape them are equally exposed to them. The darts of adverse fortune are always levelled at our heads. Some reach us, some graze against us, and fly to wound our neighbours. Let us therefore impose an equal temper on our minds, and pay without murmuring the tribute which we owe to humanity. The winter brings cold, and we must freeze. The summer returns with heat, and we must melt. The inclemency of the air disorders our health, and we must be sick. Here we are exposed to wild beasts, and there to men more savage than the beasts ; and if we escape the inconveniences and dangers of the air and the earth, there are perils by water and perils by fire. This established course of things it is not in our power to change ; but it is in our power to assume such a greatness of mind as becomes wise and virtuous men ; as may enable us to encounter the accidents of life with fortitude, and to conform ourselves to the order of nature, who governs her great kingdom, the world, by continual mutations. Let us submit to this order, let us be persuaded that whatever does happen ought to happen, and never be so foolish as to expostulate with nature. The best resolution we can take is to suffer what we cannot alter, and to pursue, without repining, the road which Providence, who directs everything, has marked out to us ; for it is not enough to follow ; and he is but a bad soldier who sighs, and marches on with reluctance. We must receive the orders with spirit and cheerfulness, and not endeavour to slink out of the post which is assigned us in this beautiful disposition of things, whereof even our sufferings make a necessary part. Let us address ourselves to God, who governs all, as Cleanthes did in those admirable verses, which are going to lose part of their grace and energy in my translation of them.

Parent of nature ! Master of the world !

Where'er thy Providence directs, behold

My steps with cheerful resignation turn.

Fate leads the willing, drags the backward on.

Why should I grieve, when grieving I must bear ?

Or take with guilt, what guiltless I might share ?

Thus let us speak, and thus let us act. Resignation to the will of God is true magnanimity. But the sure mark of a pusillanimous and base spirit, is to struggle against, to censure, the order of Providence, and instead of mending our own conduct, to set up for correcting that of our Maker.

BOLINGBROKE

ON THE SPIRIT OF PATRIOTISM.

MY LORD,

1736.

You have engaged me on a subject which interrupts the series of those letters I was writing to you, but it is one which, I confess, I have very much at heart. I shall, therefore, explain myself fully, nor blush to reason on principles that are out of fashion among men, who intend nothing by serving the public, but to feed their avarice, their vanity, and luxury, without the sense of duty they owe to God or man.

It seems to me, that in order to maintain the moral system of the world at a certain point, far below that of ideal perfection (for we are made capable of conceiving what we are incapable of attaining) but, however, sufficient upon the whole to constitute a state easy and happy, or at the worst tolerable; I say, it seems to me, that the Author of nature has thought fit to mingle, from time to time, among the societies of men, a few, and but a few, of those on whom He is graciously pleased to bestow a larger proportion of the ethereal spirit, than is given in the ordinary course of His providence to the sons of men. These are they who engross almost the whole reason of the species; who are born to instruct, to guide, and to preserve; who are designed to be the tutors and the guardians of human kind. When they prove such, they exhibit to us examples of the highest virtue and the truest piety, and they deserve to have their festivals kept. When these men apply their talents to other purposes, when they strive to be great, and despise being good, they commit a most sacrilegious breach of trust; they pervert the means, they defeat, as far as lies in them, the designs of Providence, and disturb, in some sort, the system of infinite wisdom. To misapply these talents is the most diffused, and therefore, the greatest of crimes in its nature and consequences; but to keep them unexerted and unemployed is a crime too. Look about you, my lord, from the palace to the cottage; you will find that the bulk of mankind is made to breathe the air of this atmosphere, to roam about this globe, and to consume, like the courtiers of Alcinous, the fruits of the earth. ‘*Nos numrus sumus, et fruges consumere nati;*’ When they have trod this insipid round, a certain number of years, and begot others to do the same after them, they have lived; and if they have performed in some tolerable degree the ordinary moral duties of life, they have done all they were born to do. Look about you again, my lord, nay look into your own breast, and you will find that there are superior spirits, men who show even from their infancy, though it be not always perceived by others, per-

haps not always felt by themselves, that they were born for something more, and better. These are the men to whom the part I mentioned is assigned. Their talents denote their general designation, and the opportunities of conforming themselves to it, that arise in the course of things, or that are presented to them by any circumstances of rank and situation in the society to which they belong, denote the particular vocation, which it is not lawful for them to resist, nor even to neglect. The duration of the lives of such men as these is to be determined, I think, by the length and importance of the parts they act, not by the number of years that pass between their coming into the world and their going out of it. Whether the piece be of three or five acts, the part may be long; and he who sustains it through the whole, may be said to die in the fullness of years, whilst he who declines it sooner, may be said not to live out half his days.

I have sometimes represented to myself the vulgar, who are accidentally distinguished by the titles of king and subject, of lord and vassal, of nobleman and peasant; and the few, who are distinguished by nature so essentially from the herd of mankind, that (figure apart) they seem to be of another species, in this manner: the former come into the world, and continue in it, like Dutch travellers in a foreign country. Everything they meet has the grace of novelty, and they are fond alike of everything that is new. They wander about from one object to another, of vain curiosity, or inelegant pleasure. If they are industrious, they show their industry in copying signs, and collecting mottoes and epitaphs. They loiter, or they trifle away their whole time, and their presence or their absence would be equally unperceived, if caprice or accident did not raise them often to stations, wherein their stupidity, their vices, or their follies, make them a public misfortune. The latter come into the world, or at least continue in it after the effects of surprise and inexperience are over, like men who are sent on more important errands. They observe with distinction, they admire with knowledge. They may indulge themselves in pleasure: but as their industry is not employed about trifles, so their amusements are not made the business of their lives. Such men cannot pass unperceived through a country. If they retire from the world their splendour accompanies them, and enlightens even the obscurity of their retreat. If they take a part in public life, the effect is never indifferent. They either appear like ministers of Divine vengeance, and their course through the world is marked by desolation and oppression, by poverty and servitude; or they are the guardian angels of the country they inhabit, busy to avert even the most distant evil, and to maintain or to procure peace, plenty, and, the greatest of human blessings, liberty.

From the observation, that superiority of parts is often employed to do superior mischief, no consequence can be drawn against the truth I endeavour to establish. Reason collects the will of God from the constitution of things in this as in other cases. Reason deceives us

not ; we deceive ourselves, and suffer our wills to be determined by other motives. Montaigne or Charron would say, ‘*L’homme se pipe*,’ ‘man is at once his own sharper, and his own bubble.’ He who considers the universal wants, imperfections, and vices of his kind, must agree that men were intended not only for society, but to unite in commonwealths and to submit to laws; ‘*legum idcirco omnes servi sumus, ut liberi esse possimus.*’ And yet this very man will be seduced by his own passions, or the passions and examples of others, to think, or to act as if he thought, the very contrary. So he who is conscious of superior endowments, such as render him more capable than the generality of men, to secure and improve the advantages of social life, by preserving the commonwealth in strength and splendour, even he may be seduced to think, or to act as if he thought, that these endowments were given him for the gratification of his ambition and his other passions, and that there is no difference between vice and virtue, between a knave and an honest man, but one, which a prince, who died not many years ago, asserted, ‘that men of great sense were therefore ‘knaves, and men of little sense were therefore honest.’ But in neither of these cases will the truth and reason of things be altered, by such examples of human frailty. It will be still true, and reason will still demonstrate, that all men are directed by the general constitution of human nature, to submit to government; and that some men are in a particular manner designed to take care of that government on which the common happiness depends. The use that reason will make of such examples, will be only this, that since men are so apt, in every form of life and every degree of understanding, to act against their interest and their duty too, without benevolence to mankind or regard to the Divine will; it is the more incumbent on those who have this benevolence and this regard at heart, to employ all the means that the nature of the government allows, and that rank, circumstances of situation, or superiority of talents, give them, to oppose evil and promote good government, and contribute thus to preserve the moral system of the world at that point of perfection at least, which seems to have been prescribed to it by the Great Creator of every system of beings.

Give me leave now, my lord, to cast my eyes for a moment homeward, and to apply what I have been saying to the present state of Britain. That there is no profusion of the ethereal spirit to be observed among us, and that we do not abound with men of superior genius, I am ready to confess; but, I think, there is no ground for the complaints I have heard made, as if nature had not done her part in our age, as well as in former ages, by producing men capable of serving the commonwealth. The manners of our forefathers were, I believe, in many respects better; they had more probity perhaps, they had certainly more show of honour, and greater industry. But still nature sows alike, though we do not reap alike. There are, and as there

always have been, there always will be, such creatures in government as I have described above. Fortune maintains a kind of rivalship with wisdom, and piques herself often in favour of fools as well as knaves. Socrates used to say, that although no man undertakes a trade he has not learned, even the meanest; yet every one thinks himself sufficiently qualified for the hardest of all trades, that of government. He said this upon the experience he had in Greece. He would not change his opinion if he lived now in Britain. But, however, such characters as these would do little hurt, generally speaking, or would not do it long, if they stood alone. To do great hurt, some genius, some knowledge, some talents in short, natural or acquired, are necessary; less indeed, far less than are required to do good, but always some. Yet, I imagine, not the worst minister could do all the mischief he does by the misapplication of his talents alone, if it were not for the misapplication of much better talents than his, by some who join with him, and the non-application, or the faint and unsteady exercise of their talents by some who oppose him, as well as the general remissness of mankind in acquiring knowledge, and improving the parts which God has given them, for the service of the public. These are the great springs of national misfortunes. There have been monsters in other ages, and other countries, as well as ours; but they never continued their devastations long, when there were heroes to oppose them. We will suppose a man imprudent, rash, presumptuous, ungracious, insolent, and profligate in speculation as well as practice. He can bribe, but he cannot seduce; he can buy, but he cannot gain; he can lie, but he cannot deceive. From whence then has such a man his strength? From the general corruption of the people, nursed up to a full maturity under his administration; from the venality of all orders and all ranks of men, some of whom are so prostitute, that they set themselves to sale, and even prevent application. This would be the answer, and it would be a true one as far as it goes; but it does not account for the whole. Corruption could not spread with so much success, though reduced into system, and though some ministers, with equal imprudence and folly, avowed it, by themselves and their advocates, to be the principal expedient by which they governed, if a long and almost unobserved progression of causes and effects did not prepare the conjuncture. Let me explain it, and apply it, as I conceive it. One party had given their whole attention, during several years, to the project of enriching themselves, and impoverishing the rest of the nation, and, by these and other means, of establishing their dominion under the government and with the favour of a family, who were foreigners, and therefore might believe that they were established on the throne by the good will and strength of this party alone. This party in general were so intent on these views, and many of them, I fear, are so still, that they did not advert in time to the necessary consequences of the measures.

they abetted; nor did they consider, that the power they raised, and by which they hoped to govern their country, would govern them with the very rod of iron they forged, and would be the power of a prince or minister, not that of a party long. Another party continued sour, sullen, and inactive, with judgments so weak, and passions so strong, that even experience, and a severe one surely, was lost upon them. They waited, like the Jews, for a Messiah, that may never come; and under whom, if he did come, they would be strangely disappointed in their expectations of glory, and triumph, and universal dominion. Whilst they waited, they were marked out, like the Jews, a distinct race, hewers of wood and drawers of water, scarce members of the community, though born in the country. All indifferent men stood as it were at a gaze; and the few who were jealous of the court, were still more jealous of one another; so that a strength sufficient to oppose bad ministers was not easy to be formed. When this strength was formed, and the insufficiency or iniquity of the administration was daily exposed to public view, many adhered at first to the minister, and others were since gained to his cause, because they knew nothing of the constitution of their own, nor of the history of other countries; but imagined wildly, that things always went as they saw them go, and that liberty has been, and therefore may be, preserved, under the influence of the same corruption. Others perhaps were weak enough to be frightened at first, as some are hypocritical enough to pretend to be still, with the appellations of tory and Jacobite, which are always ridiculously given to every man who does not bow to the brazen image that the king has set up. Others again might be persuaded, that no fatal use at least would be made of the power acquired by corruption; and men of superior parts might and may still flatter themselves, that if this power should be so employed, they shall have time and means to stop the effects of it. The first of these are seduced by their ignorance and futility; the second, if they are not hypocrites, by their prejudices; the third, by their partiality and blind confidence; the last, by their presumption; and all of them by the mammon of unrighteousness, their private interest, which they endeavour to palliate and to reconcile as well as they can to that of the public: ‘*et cæca cupiditate corrupti, non intelligent se, dum vendunt, et venire.*’

According to this representation, which I take to be true, your lordship will agree that our unfortunate country affords an example in proof of what is asserted above. The Dutch travellers I spoke of, men of the ordinary or below the ordinary size of understanding, though they are called by caprice, or lifted any other way into power, cannot do great and long mischief, in a country of liberty, unless men of genius, knowledge, and experience, misapply these talents, and become their leaders. A ministerial faction would have as little ability to do hurt, as they have inclination to do good, if they were not formed and con-

ducted by one of better parts than they ; nor would such a minister be able to support, at the head of this trusty phalanx, the ignominious tyranny imposed on his country, if other men, of better parts and much more consequence than himself, were not drawn in to misapply these parts to the vilest drudgery imaginable ; the daily drudgery of explaining nonsense, covering ignorance, disguising folly, concealing and even justifying fraud and corruption ; instead of employing their knowledge, their elocution, their skill, experience, and authority, to correct the administration and to guard the constitution. But this is not all ; the example shows a great deal more. Your lordship's experience, as well as mine, will justify what I am going to say. It shows further, that such a conjuncture could not be rendered effectual to preserve power in some of the weakest and some of the worst hands in the kingdom, if there was not a non-application, or a faint and unsteady exercise of parts on one side, as well as an iniquitous misapplication of them on the other ; and I cannot help saying, let it fall where it will, what I have said perhaps already, that the former is a crime but one degree inferior to the latter. The more genius, industry, and spirit are employed to destroy, the harder the task of saving our country becomes ; but the duty increases with the difficulty, if the principles on which I reason are true. In such exigencies it is not enough that genius be opposed to genius ; spirit must be matched by spirit. They, who go about to destroy, are animated from the first by ambition and avarice, the love of power and of money ; fear makes them often desperate at last. They must be opposed, therefore, or they will be opposed in vain, by a spirit able to cope with ambition, avarice, and despair itself ; by a spirit able to cope with these passions, when they are favoured and fortified by the weakness of a nation and the strength of a government. In such exigencies there is little difference, as to the merit or the effect, between opposing faintly and unsteadily, and not opposing at all ; nay the former may be of worse consequence, in certain circumstances, than the latter. And this is a truth I wish with all my heart you may not see verified in our country, where many, I fear, undertake opposition not as a duty but as an adventure ; and looking on themselves like volunteers, not like men listed in the service, they deem themselves at liberty to take as much or as little of this trouble, and to continue in it as long, or end it as soon, as they please. It is but a few years ago that not the merchants alone, but the whole nation, took fire at the project of new excises. The project was opposed, not on mercantile considerations and interests alone, but on the true principles of liberty. In parliament, the opposition was strenuously enough supported for a time ; but there was so little disposition to guide and improve the spirit, that the chief concern of those who took the lead seemed applied to keep it down ; and yet your lordship remembers how high it continued against the projector, till it was calmed just before the elections of the

present parliament, by the remarkable indolence and the inactivity of the last session of the last. But these friends of ours, my lord, are as much mistaken in their ethics, as the event will show they have been in their politics.

The service of our country is no chimerical, but a real duty. He who admits the proofs of any other moral duty, drawn from the constitution of human nature, or from the moral fitness and unfitness of things, must admit them in favour of this duty, or be reduced to the most absurd inconsistency. When he has once admitted the duty on these proofs, it will be no difficult matter to demonstrate to him, that his obligation to the performance of it is in proportion to the means and the opportunities he has of performing it; and that nothing can discharge him from this obligation as long as he has these means and these opportunities in his power, and as long as his country continues in the same want of his services. These obligations, then, to the public service may become obligations for life on certain persons. No doubt they may; and shall this consideration become a reason for denying or evading them? On the contrary, sure it should become a reason for acknowledging and fulfilling them, with the greatest gratitude to the Supreme Being, who has made us capable of acting so excellent a part, and with the utmost benevolence to mankind. Superior talents, and superior rank amongst our fellow-creatures, whether acquired by birth, or by the course of accidents, and the success of our own industry, are noble prerogatives. Shall he who possesses them, repine at the obligation they lay him under, of passing his whole life in the noblest occupation of which human nature is capable? To what higher station, to what greater glory can any mortal aspire, than to be, during the whole course of his life, the support of good, the control of bad government, and the guardian of public liberty? To be driven from hence by successful tyranny, by loss of health or of parts, or by the force of accidents, is to be degraded in such a manner as to deserve pity, and not to incur blame; but to degrade ourselves, to descend voluntarily, and by choice, from the highest to a lower, perhaps to the lowest rank among the sons of Adam; to abandon the government of men for that of hounds and horses, the care of a kingdom for that of a parish, and a scene of great and generous efforts in public life, for one of trifling amusements and low cares, of sloth and of idleness, what is it, my lord? I had rather your lordship should name it than I. Will it be said that it is hard to exact from some men, in favour of others, that they should renounce all the pleasures of life, and drudge all their days in business, that others may indulge themselves in ease? It will be said without grounds. A life dedicated to the service of our country admits the full use, and no life should admit the abuse, of pleasures; the least are consistent with a constant discharge of our public duty, the greatest arise from it. The common, the sensual pleasures to which

nature prompts us, are so far from being excluded out of a life of business, that they are sometimes necessary in it, and are always heightened by it : those of the table, for instance, may be ordered so as to promote that which the elder Cato calls ‘*vitæ conjunctionem*.’ In the midst of public duties, private studies, and an extreme old age, he found time to frequent the ‘*sodalitates*,’ or clubs of friends, at Rome, and to sit up all night with his neighbours in the country of the Sabines. Cato’s virtue often glowed with wine; and the love of women did not hinder Cæsar from forming and executing the greatest projects that ambition ever suggested. But if Cæsar, whilst he laboured to destroy the liberties of his country, enjoyed these inferior pleasures of life, there are superior pleasures in a busy life that Cæsar never knew: those, I mean, that arise from a faithful discharge of our duty to the commonwealth. Neither Montaigne in writing his essays, nor Des Cartes in building new worlds, nor Burnet in framing an antediluvian earth, no, nor Newton in discovering and establishing the true laws of nature on experiment and a sublimer geometry, felt more intellectual joys, than he feels who is a real patriot, who bends all the force of his understanding, and directs all his thoughts and actions, to the good of his country. When such a man forms a political scheme, and adjusts various and seemingly independent parts in it to one great and good design, he is transported by imagination, or absorbed in meditation, as much and as agreeably as they; and the satisfaction that arises from the different importance of these objects, in every step of the work, is vastly in his favour. It is here that the speculative philosopher’s labour and pleasure end. But he, who speculates in order to act, goes on, and carries his scheme into execution. His labour continues, it varies, it increases; but so does his pleasure too. The execution indeed is often traversed by unforeseen and untoward circumstances, by the perverseness or treachery of friends, and by the power or malice of enemies; but the first and the last of these animate, and the docility and fidelity of some men make amends for the perverseness and treachery of others. Whilst a great event is in suspense, the action warms, and the very suspense, made up of hope and fear, maintains no unpleasing agitation in the mind. If the event is decided successfully, such a man enjoys pleasure proportionable to the good he has done; a pleasure like to that which is attributed to the Supreme Being on a survey of His works. If the event is decided otherwise, and usurping courts or overbearing parties prevail; such a man has still the testimony of his conscience, and a sense of the honour he has acquired, to soothe his mind, and support his courage. For although the course of state-affairs be to those who meddle in them like a lottery, yet it is a lottery wherein no good man can be a loser; he may be reviled, it is true, instead of being applauded, and may suffer violence of many kinds. I will not say, like Seneca, that the noblest spectacle

which God can behold, is a virtuous man suffering, and struggling with afflictions; but this I will say, that the second Cato, driven out of the forum, and dragged to prison, enjoyed more inward pleasure, and maintained more outward dignity, than they who insulted him, and who triumphed in the ruin of their country. But the very example of Cato may be urged, perhaps, against what I have insisted upon; it may be asked, what good he did to Rome, by dedicating his whole life to her service,—what honour to himself, by dying at Utica? It may be said, that governments have their periods, like all things human; that they may be brought back to their primitive principles during a certain time, but that when these principles are worn out in the minds of men, it is a vain enterprise to endeavour to renew them; that this is the case of all governments when the corruption of the people comes to a great pitch, and is grown universal; that when a house which is old and quite decayed, though often repaired, not only cracks, but totters even from the foundations, every man in his senses runs out of it, and takes shelter where he can, and that none but madmen continue obstinate to repair what is irreparable, till they are crushed in the ruin; just so, that we must content ourselves to live under the government we like the least, when that form which we like the most is destroyed, or worn out; according to the council of Dolabella in one of his letters to Cicero. But, my lord, if Cato could not save, he prolonged the life of liberty; the liberties of Rome would have been lost when Catiline attacked them, abetted probably by Cæsar and Crassus, and the worst citizens of Rome; and when Cicero defended them, abetted by Cato and the best. That Cato erred in his conduct, by giving way too much to the natural roughness of his temper, and by allowing too little for that of the Romans, among whom luxury had long prevailed, and corruption was openly practised, is most true. He was incapable of employing those seeming compliances that are reconcileable to the greatest steadiness, and treated unskilfully a crazy constitution. The safety of the commonwealth depended, in that critical conjuncture, on a coalition of parties, the senatorian and the equestrian; Tully had formed it, Cato broke it. But if this good, for I think he was not an able, man erred in the particular respects I have ventured to mention, he deserved most certainly the glory he acquired by the general tenor of his conduct, and by dedicating the whole labour of his life to the service of his country. He would have deserved more, if he had persisted in maintaining the same cause to the end, and would have died, I think, with a better grace at Munda than at Utica. If this be so, if Cato may be censured, severely indeed, but justly, for abandoning the cause of liberty, which he would not, however, survive; what shall we say of those who embrace it faintly, pursue it irresolutely, grow tired of it when they have much to hope, and give it up when they have nothing to fear?

My lord, I have insisted the more on this duty which men owe to their country, because I came out of England, and continue still, strongly affected with what I saw when I was there. Our government has approached nearer than ever before to the true principles of it since the revolution of 1688; and the accession of the present family to the throne has given the fairest opportunities, as well as the justest reasons, for completing the scheme of liberty and improving it to perfection. But it seems to me, that in our separate world, as the means of asserting and supporting liberty are increased, all concern for it is diminished. I beheld, when I was among you, more abject servility in the manners and behaviour of particular men than I ever saw in France, or than has been seen there, I believe, since the days of that Gascon, who, being turned out of the minister's door, leaped in again at his window. As to bodies of men, I dare challenge your lordship, and I am sorry for it, to produce any instances of resistance to the unjust demands or wanton will of a court, that British parliaments have given, comparable to such as I am able to cite to the honour of the parliament of Paris, and the whole body of the law in that country within the same compass of time. This abject servility may appear justly the more wonderful in Britain, because the government of Britain has, in some sort, the appearance of an oligarchy; and monarchy is rather hid behind it than shown, rather weakened than strengthened, rather imposed upon than obeyed. The wonder, therefore, is to observe how imagination and custom, a giddy fool and a formal pedant, have rendered these cabals or oligarchies more respected than majesty itself. That this should happen in countries where princes who have absolute power may be tyrants themselves, or substitute subordinate tyrants is not wonderful. It has happened often; but that it should happen in Britain may be justly an object of wonder. In these countries the people had lost the armour of their constitution: they were naked and defenceless. Ours is more complete than ever. But though we have preserved the armour, we have lost the spirit, of our constitution; and therefore we bear, from little engrossers of delegated power, what our fathers would not have suffered from true proprietors of the royal authority. Parliaments are not only, what they always were, essential parts of our constitution, but essential parts of our administration too. They do not claim the executive power. No. But the executive power cannot be exercised without their annual concurrence. How few months, instead of years, have princes and ministers now to pass, without inspection and control? How easy, therefore, is it become to check every growing evil in the bud; to change every bad administration; to keep such farmers of government in awe; to maintain, and revenge, if need be, the constitution? It is become so easy by the present form of our government, that corruption alone could not destroy us. We must want spirit

as well as virtue to perish. Even able knaves would preserve liberty in such circumstances as ours, and highwaymen would scorn to receive the wages and do the drudgery of pickpockets. But all is little and low and mean among us ! Far from having the virtues, we have not even the vices of great men. He who has pride instead of vanity, and ambition but equal to his desire of wealth, could never bear, I do not say, to be the under-strapper to any farmer of royal authority, but to see patiently one of them, at best his fellow, perhaps his inferior in every respect, lord it over him and the rest of mankind, dissipating the wealth, and trampling on the liberties of his country with impunity. This could not happen if there was the least spirit among us. But there is none. What passes among us for ambition is an odd mixture of avarice and vanity; the moderation we have seen practised is pusillanimity, and the philosophy that some men affect is sloth. Hence it comes that corruption has spread and prevails.

I expect little from the principal actors that tread the stage at present. They are divided, not so much as it has seemed, and as they would have it believed, about measures; the true division is about their different ends. Whilst the minister was not hard pushed, nor the prospect of succeeding to him near, they appeared to have but one end, the reformation of the government. The destruction of the minister was pursued only as a preliminary, but of essential and indispensable necessity to that end. But when his destruction seemed to approach, the object of his succession interposed to the sight of many, and the reformation of the government was no longer their point of view. They divided the skin, at least in their thoughts, before they had taken the beast; and the common fear, of hunting him down for others, made them all faint in the chase. It was this, and this alone, that has saved him, or has put off his evil day. Corruption, so much and so justly complained of, could not have done it alone.

When I say that I expect little from the principal actors that tread the stage at present, I am far from applying to all of them what I take to be true of the far greatest part. There are men among them who certainly intend the good of their country, and whom I love and honour for that reason. But these men have been clogged or misled or overborne by others; and, seduced by natural temper to inactivity, have taken any excuse, or yielded to any pretence that favoured it. That they should rouse, therefore, in themselves, or in any one else, the spirit they have suffered, nay, helped, to die away, I do not expect. I turn mine eyes from the generation that is going off, to the generation that is coming on the stage. I expect good from them, and from none of them more than from you, my lord. Remember that the opposition in which you have engaged at your first entrance into business, is not an opposition only to a bad administration of public affairs, but to an administration that supports itself by means, establishes

principles, introduces customs, repugnant to the constitution of our government, and destructive of all liberty; that you do not only combat present evils, but attempts to entail such upon you and your posterity; that if you cease the combat, you give up the cause; and that he who does not renew on every occasion his claim, may forfeit his right.

Our disputes were formerly, to say the truth, much more about persons than things; or, at most, about particular points of political conduct, in which we should have soon agreed, if persons and personal interests had been less concerned, and the blind prejudice of party less prevalent. Whether the Big-endians or the Little-endians got the better, I believe, no man of sense and knowledge thought the constitution concerned; notwithstanding all the clamour raised at one time about the danger of the church, and at another about the danger of the protestant succession. But the case is at this time vastly altered. The means of invading liberty more effectually by the constitution of the revenue, than it ever had been invaded by prerogative, were not then grown up into strength. They are so now, and a bold and an insolent use is made of them. To reform the state, therefore, is, and ought to be, the object of your opposition, as well as to reform the administration. Why do I say as well? It is so, and it ought to be so much more. Wrest the power of the government, if you can, out of hands that have employed it weakly and wickedly, ever since it was thrown into them by a silly bargain made in one reign, and a corrupt bargain made in another. But do not imagine this to be your sole or your principal business. You owe to your country, to your honour, to your security, to the present, and to future ages, that no endeavours of yours be wanting to repair the breach that is made, and is increasing daily in the constitution; and to shut up with all the bars and bolts of law the principal entries through which these torrents of corruption have been let in upon us. I say, the principal entries, because, however it may appear in pure speculation, I think it would not be found in practice possible, no, nor eligible either, to shut them up all. As entries of corruption none of them deserve to be excepted; but there is a just distinction to be made, because there is a real difference. Some of these entries are opened by the abuse of powers necessary to maintain subordination and to carry on even good government, and therefore necessary to be preserved in the crown, notwithstanding the abuse that is sometimes made of them; for no human institution can arrive at perfection, and the most that human wisdom can do is to procure the same or greater good, at the expense of less evil. There will be always some evil, either immediate or remote, either in cause or consequence. But there are other entries of corruption, and these are by much the greatest, for suffering of which to continue open, no reason can be assigned, or has been pretended to be assigned, but that which is, to every honest and wise man, a reason for shutting them up;

the increase of the means of corruption, which are oftener employed for the service of the oligarchy, than for the service of the monarchy. Shut up these, and you will have nothing to fear from the others. By these, a real and a more dangerous power has been gained to ministers than was lost to the crown by the restraint on prerogative.

There have been periods when our government continued free, with strong appearances of becoming absolute. Let it be your glory, my lord, and that of the new generation springing up with you, that this government do not become absolute at any future period, with the appearances of being free. However you may be employed, in all your counsels, in all your actions, keep this regard to the constitution always in sight. The scene that opens before you is great, and the part that you will have to act, difficult. It is difficult, indeed, to bring men, from strong habits of corruption, to prefer honour to profit, and liberty to luxury; as it is hard to teach princes the great art of governing all by all, or to prevail on them to practise it. But if it be a difficult, it is a glorious attempt; an attempt, worthy to exert the greatest talents, and to fill the most extended life. Pursue it with courage, my lord, nor despair of success.

‘Deus hæc fortasse benigna reducet in sedem vice.’

A parliament, nay, one house of parliament, is able, at any time, and at once, to destroy any corrupt plan of power. Time produces every day new conjunctures. Be prepared to improve them. We read, in the Old Testament, of a city that might have escaped Divine vengeance if five righteous men had been found in it. Let not our city perish for want of so small a number; and if the generation that is going off could not furnish it, let the generation coming on furnish a greater.

We may reasonably hope that it will, from the first essays which your lordship and some others of our young senators have made in public life. You have raised the hopes of your country by the proofs you have given of superior parts. Confirm these hopes by proofs of uncommon industry, application, and perseverance. Superior parts, nay, even superior virtue, without these qualities, will be insufficient to support your character and your cause. How many men have appeared in my time, who have made these essays with success, and have made no progress afterwards? Some have dropped, from their first flights, down into the vulgar crowd, have been distinguished, nay, heard of no more. Others, with better parts, perhaps with more presumption, but certainly with greater ridicule, have persisted in making these essays towards business all their lives, and have never been able to advance farther, in their political course, than a pre-meditated harangue on some choice subject. I never saw one of these important persons sit down after his oration, with repeated ‘hear-hims’ ringing in his ears, and inward rapture glowing in his eyes, that he did

not recal to my memory the story of a conceited member of some parliament in France, who was overheard, after his tedious harangue, muttering most devoutly to himself, ‘*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam!*’

Eloquence has charms to lead mankind, and gives a nobler superiority than power, that every dunce may use, or fraud, that every knave may employ. But eloquence must flow like a stream that is fed by an abundant spring, and not spout forth a little frothy water on some gaudy day, and remain dry the rest of the year. The famous orators of Greece and Rome were the statesmen and ministers of those commonwealths. The nature of their governments, and the humour of those ages made elaborate orations necessary. They harangued oftener than they debated: and the ‘*ars dicendi*’ required more study and more exercise of mind, and of body too, among them, than are necessary among us. But as much pains as they took in learning how to conduct the stream of eloquence, they took more to enlarge the fountain from which it flowed. Hear Demosthenes, hear Cicero, thunder against Philip, Catiline, and Antony. I choose the example of the first, rather than that of Pericles, whom he imitated, or of Phocion, whom he opposed, or of any other considerable personage in Greece; and the example of Cicero rather than that of Crassus, or of Hortensius, or of any other of the great men of Rome; because the eloquence of these two has been so celebrated, that we are accustomed to look upon them almost as mere orators. They were orators indeed, and no man who has a soul can read their orations, after the revolution of so many ages, after the extinction of the governments, and of the people for whom they were composed, without feeling, at this hour, the passions they were designed to move, and the spirit they were designed to raise. But if we look into the history of these two men, and consider the parts they acted, we shall see them in another light, and admire them in a higher sphere of action. Demosthenes had been neglected, in his education, by the same tutors who cheated him of his inheritance. Cicero was bred with greater advantage: and Plutarch, I think, says, that when he first appeared the people used to call him, by way of derision, the Greek, and the scholar. But whatever advantage of this kind the latter might have over the former, and to which of them soever you ascribe the superior genius, the progress which both of them made in every part of political knowledge, by their industry and application, was marvellous. Cicero might be a better philosopher, but Demosthenes was no less a statesman; and both of them performed actions, and acquired fame, above the reach of eloquence alone. Demosthenes used to compare eloquence to a weapon, aptly enough; for eloquence, like every other weapon, is of little use to the owner, unless he have the force and the skill to use it. This force and this skill Demosthenes had in an eminent degree.

Observe them in one instance among many. It was of mighty importance to Philip, to prevent the accession of Thebes to the grand alliance that Demosthenes, at the head of the Athenian commonwealth, formed against the growing power of the Macedonians. Philip had emissaries and his ambassadors on the spot, to oppose to those of Athens, and we may be assured that he neglected none of those arts upon this occasion, that he employed so successfully on others. The struggle was great, but Demosthenes prevailed, and the Thebans engaged in the war against Philip. Was it by his eloquence alone that he prevailed, in a divided state, over all the subtlety of intrigue, all the dexterity of negotiation, all the seduction, all the corruption, and all the terror that the ablest and most powerful prince could employ? Was Demosthenes wholly taken up with composing orations, and haranguing the people in this remarkable crisis? He harangued them, no doubt, at Thebes, as well as at Athens, and in the rest of Greece, where all the great resolutions of making alliances, waging war, or concluding peace, were determined in democratical assemblies. But yet haranguing was, no doubt, the least part of his business, and eloquence was neither the sole, nor the principal talent, as the style of writers would induce us to believe, on which his success depended. He must have been master of other arts, subserviently to which his eloquence was employed, and must have had a thorough knowledge of his own state, and of the other states of Greece, of their dispositions, and of their interests relatively to one another, and relatively to their neighbours, to the Persians particularly, with whom he held a correspondence, not much to his honour in appearance, whatever he might intend by it; I say, he must have been master of many other arts, and have possessed an immense fund of knowledge, to make his eloquence in every case successful, and even pertinent or seasonable in some, as well as to direct it, and to furnish it with matter whenever he thought proper to employ this weapon.

Let us consider Tully on the greatest theatre of the known world, and in the most difficult circumstances. We are better acquainted with him than we are with Demosthenes; for we see him nearer, as it were, and in more different lights. How perfect a knowledge had he acquired of the Roman constitution of government, ecclesiastical and civil; of the original and progress, of the general reasons and particular occasions of the laws and customs of his country; of the great rules of equity, and the low practice of courts; of the duty of every magistracy and office in the state, from the dictator down to the lictor; and of all the steps by which Rome had risen, from her infancy, to liberty, to power, and grandeur, and dominion, as well as of all those by which she began to decline, a little before his age, to that servitude which he died for opposing, but lived to see established, and in which not her liberty alone, but her power, and grandeur, and dominion were lost?

How well was he acquainted with the Roman colonies and provinces, with the allies and enemies of the empire, with the rights and privileges of the former, the dispositions and conditions of the latter, with the interests of them all relatively to Rome, and with the interests of Rome relatively to them? How present to his mind were the anecdotes of former times concerning the Roman and other states, and how curious was he to observe the minutest circumstances that passed in his own? His works will answer sufficiently the questions I ask, and establish in the mind of every man who reads them the idea I would give of his capacity and knowledge, as well as that which is so universally taken of his eloquence. To a man fraught with all this stock of knowledge, and industrious to improve it daily, nothing could happen that was entirely new, nothing for which he was quite unprepared, scarce any effect whereof he had not considered the cause, scarce any cause wherein his sagacity could not discern the latent effect. His eloquence in private causes gave him first credit at Rome; but it was this knowledge, this experience, and the continued habits of business, that supported his reputation, enabled him to do so much service to his country, and gave force and authority to his eloquence. To little purpose would he have attacked Catiline with all the vehemence that indignation, and even fear, added to eloquence, if he had trusted to this weapon alone. This weapon alone would have secured neither him nor the senate from the poniard of that assassin. He would have had no occasion to boast, that he had driven this infamous citizen out of the walls of Rome, ‘abut, excessit, evasit, erupit,’ if he had not made it, beforehand, impossible for him to continue any longer in them. As little occasion would he have had to assume the honour of defeating, without any tumult, or any disorder, the designs of those who conspired to murder the Roman people, to destroy the Roman empire, and to extinguish the Roman name; if he had not united, by skill and management, in the common cause of their country, orders of men the most averse to each other; if he had not watched all the machinations of the conspirators in silence, and prepared a strength sufficient to resist them at Rome, and in the provinces, before he opened the scene of villainy to the senate and the people: in a word, if he had not made much more use of political prudence, that is, of the knowledge of mankind, and of the arts of government, which study and experience give, than of all the powers of his eloquence.

Such was Demosthenes, such was Cicero, such were all the great men whose memories are preserved in history, and such must every man be, or endeavour to be, if he has either sense or sentiment, who presumes to meddle in affairs of government, of a free government I mean, and hopes to maintain a distinguished character in popular assemblies, whatever part he takes, whether that of supporting, or that of opposing. I put the two cases purposely, my lord, because I have

observed, and your lordship will have frequent occasions of observing, many persons who seem to think that opposition to an administration requires fewer preparatives, and less constant application, than the conduct of it. Now, my lord, I take this to be a gross error, and, I am sure, it has been a fatal one. It is one of those errors, and there are many such, which men impute to judgment, and which proceed from the defect of judgment, as this does from lightness, irresolution, laziness, and a false notion of opposition ; unless the persons who seem to think, do not really think in this manner, but, serving the public purely for interest, and not for fame, nor for duty, decline taking the same pains when they oppose without personal and immediate reward, as they are willing to take when they are paid for serving. Look about you, and you will see men eager to speak, and keen to act, when particular occasions press them, or particular motives excite them, but quite unprepared for either ; and hence all that superficiality in speaking, for want of information ; hence all that confusion or inactivity, for want of concert ; and all that disappointment, for want of preliminary measures. They who affect to head an opposition, or to make any considerable figure in it, must be equal, at least, to those whom they oppose ; I do not say, in parts only, but in application and industry, and the fruits of both, information, knowledge, and a certain constant preparedness for all the events that may arise. Every administration is a system of conduct ; opposition, therefore, should be a system of conduct likewise ; an opposite, but not a dependent system. I shall explain myself better by an example. When two armies take the field, the generals on both sides have their different plans for the campaign, either of defence or of offence ; and as the former does not suspend his measures till he is attacked, but takes them beforehand on every probable contingency, so the latter does not suspend his till the opportunity of attacking presents itself, but is alert, and constantly ready to seize it whenever it happens ; and, in the mean time, is busy to improve all the advantages of skill, of force, or of any other kind that he has, or that he can acquire, independently of the plan, and of the motions of his enemy.

In a word, my lord, this is my notion, and I submit it to you. According to the present form of our constitution, every member of either house of parliament is a member of a national standing council, born, or appointed by the people, to promote good, and to oppose bad government ; and if not vested with the power of a minister of state, yet vested with the superior power of controlling those who are appointed such by the crown. It follows from hence, that they who engage in opposition, are under as great obligations to prepare themselves to control, as they who serve the crown are under to prepare themselves to carry on, the administration ; and that a party, formed for this purpose, do not act like good citizens nor honest men unless

they propose true as well as oppose false measures of government. Sure I am, they do not act like wise men, unless they act systematically, and unless they contrast, on every occasion, that scheme of policy which the public interest requires to be followed, with that which is suited to no interest but the private interest of the prince, or his ministers. Cunning men (several such there are among you) will dislike this consequence, and object, that such a conduct would support, under the appearance of opposing, a weak, and even a wicked administration; and that to proceed in this manner, would be to give good counsel to a bad minister, and to extricate him out of distresses that ought to be improved to his ruin. But cunning pays no regard to virtue, and is but the low mimic of wisdom. It were easy to demonstrate what I have asserted concerning the duty of an opposing party; and I presume there is no need of labouring to prove, that a party who opposed, systematically, a wise to a silly, an honest to an iniquitous, scheme of government, would acquire greater reputation and strength, and arrive more surely at their end, than a party who opposed, occasionally as it were, without any common system, without any general concert, with little uniformity, little preparation, little perseverance, and as little knowledge or political capacity. But it is time to leave this invidious subject, and to hasten to the conclusion of my letter before it grows into a book.

BOLINGBROKE ON THE IDEA OF A PATRIOT KING.

INTRODUCTION.

Dec. 1, 1738.

REVISING some letters I writ to my lord ***, I found in one of them a great deal said concerning the duties which men owe to their country, those men particularly who live under a free constitution of government; with a strong application of these general doctrines to the present state of Great Britain, and to the characters of the present actors on this stage.

I saw no reason to alter, none even to soften, anything that is there advanced. On the contrary, it came into my mind to carry these considerations further, and to delineate, for I pretend not to make a perfect draught, the duties of a king to his country; of those kings particularly, who are appointed by the people, for I know of none who are anointed by God to rule in limited monarchies. After

which, I proposed to apply the general doctrines in this case, as strongly and as directly as in the other, to the present state of the kingdom of Great Britain.

I am not one of those oriental slaves, who deem it unlawful presumption to look their kings in the face; neither am I swayed by my Lord Bacon's authority, to think this custom good and reasonable in its meaning, though it savours of barbarism in its institution: 'Ritu quidem barbarus, sed significatio bonus.' Much otherwise. It seems to me, that no secrets are so important to be known, no hearts deserve to be pried into with more curiosity and attention, than those of princes. But many things have concurred, besides age and temper, to set me at a great distance from the present court. Far from prying into the hearts, I scarce know the faces, of our royal family. I shall therefore decline all application to their characters, and all mention of any influence which their characters may have on their own fortune, or on that of this nation.

The principles I have reasoned upon before, and those I shall reason upon now, are the same. They are laid in the same system of human nature. They are drawn from that source from whence all the duties of public and private morality must be derived, or they will be often falsely, and always precariously, established. Up to this source there are few men who take the pains to go; and, open as it lies, there are not many who can find their way to it. By such as do, I shall be understood and approved; and, far from fearing the censure or the ridicule, I should reproach myself with the applause, of men who measure their interest by their passions, and their duty by the examples of a corrupt age; that is, by the examples they afford to one another. Such, I think, are the greatest part of the present generation; not of the vulgar alone, but of those who stand foremost, and are raised highest in our nation. Such we may justly apprehend too that the next will be; since they who are to compose it will set out into the world under a direction that must incline them strongly to the same course of self-interest, profligacy, and corruption.

The iniquity of all the principal men in any community, of kings and ministers especially, does not consist alone in the crimes they commit, and in the immediate consequences of these crimes; and therefore their guilt is not to be measured by these alone. Such men sin against posterity as well as against their own age, and when the consequences of their crimes are over, the consequences of their example remain. I think, and every wise and honest man in generations yet unborn will think, if the history of this administration descends to blacken our annals, that the greatest iniquity of the minister, on whom the whole iniquity ought to be charged, since he has been so long in possession of the whole power, is the constant endeavour he has employed to corrupt the morals of men. I say thus generally, the morals, because he

who abandons or betrays his country, will abandon or betray his friend ; and because he, who is prevailed on to act in parliament without any regard to truth or justice, will easily prevail on himself to act in the same manner everywhere else. A wiser and honester administration may relieve our trade from that oppression, and the public from that load of debt, under which it must be supposed that he has industriously kept it ; because we are able to prove, by fair calculations, that he might have provided effectually for the payment of it, since he came to the head of the treasury. A wiser and honester administration may draw us back to our former credit and influence abroad, from that state of contempt into which we are sunk among all our neighbours. But will the minds of men which this minister has narrowed to personal regards alone, will their views, which he has confined to the present moment, as if nations were mortal like the men who compose them, and Britain was to perish with her degenerate children ; will these, I say, be so easily or so soon enlarged ? Will their sentiments, which are debased from the love of liberty, from zeal for the honour and prosperity of their country, and from a desire of honest fame, to an absolute unconcernedness for all these, to an abject submission, and to a rapacious eagerness after wealth, that may sate their avarice, and exceed the profusion of their luxury ; will these, I say again, be so easily or so soon elevated ? In a word, will the British spirit, that spirit which has preserved liberty hitherto in one corner of the world at least, be so easily or so soon reinfused into the British nation ? I think not. We have been long coming to this point of depravation, and the progress from confirmed habits of evil is much more slow than the progress to them. Virtue is not placed on a rugged mountain of difficult and dangerous access, as they who would excuse the indolence of their temper, or the perverseness of their will, desire to have it believed ; but she is seated, however, on an eminence. We may go up to her with ease, but we must go up gradually, according to the natural progression of reason, who is to lead the way and to guide our steps. On the other hand, if we fall from thence, we are sure to be hurried down the hill with a blind impetuosity, according to the natural violence of those appetites and passions that caused our fall at first, and urge it on the faster the further they are removed from the control that before restrained them.

To perform, therefore, so great a work as to reinfuse the spirit of liberty, to reform the morals, and to raise the sentiments of a people, much time is required ; and a work which requires so much time may, too probably, be never completed ; considering how unsteadily and unsystematically even the best of men are apt often to proceed, and how this reformation is to be carried forward, in opposition to public fashion and private inclination, to the authority of the men in power, and to the secret bent of many of those who

out of power. Let us not flatter ourselves: I did so too long. It is more to be wished than to be hoped, that the contagion should spread no further than that leprous race, who carry on their skins, exposed to public sight, the blotches of their distemper. The minister preaches corruption aloud and constantly, like an impudent missionary of vice: and some there are who not only insinuate, but teach the same occasionally. I say some, because I am as far from thinking that all those who join with him, as that any of those who oppose him, wait only to be more authorized, that they may propagate it with greater success, and apply it to their own use in their turn.

It seems to me, upon the whole matter, that to save or redeem a nation, under such circumstances, from perdition, nothing less is necessary than some great, some extraordinary conjuncture of ill fortune, or of good, which may purge, yet so as by fire. Distress from abroad, bankruptcy at home, and other circumstances of like nature and tendency, may beget universal confusion. Out of confusion order may arise; but it may be the order of a wicked tyranny, instead of the order of a just monarchy. Either may happen, and such an alternative at the disposition of fortune, is sufficient to make a Stoic tremble! We may be saved indeed, by means of a very different king; but these means will not offer themselves, this way of salvation will not be opened to us, without the concurrence and the influence of a patriot king, the most uncommon of all phenomena in the physical or in the moral world.

Nothing can so surely and so effectually restore the virtue and public spirit essential to the preservation of liberty and national prosperity, as the reign of such a prince.

We are willing to indulge this pleasing expectation, and there is nothing we desire more ardently than to be able to hold of a British prince, without flattery, the same language that was held of a Roman emperor, with a great deal,—

‘Nil oriturum alias, nil ortum tale fatentes.’

But let us not neglect, on our part, such means as are in our power, to keep the cause of truth, of reason, of virtue, and of liberty, alive. If the blessing be withheld from us, let us deserve, at least, that it should be granted to us. If heaven in mercy, bestows it on us, let us prepare to receive it, to improve it, and to co-operate with it.

I speak as if I could take my share in these glorious efforts. Neither shall I recall my words. Stripped of the rights of a British subject, of all except the meanest of them, that of inheriting, I remember that I am a Briton still, I apply to myself what I have read in Seneca, ‘*Officia si civis amiserit, hominis exerceat.*’ I have renounced the world, not in show, but in reality, and more by my way of thinking, than by my way of living, as retired as that may seem. But I have

not renounced my country, nor my friends; and by my friends I mean all those, and those alone, who are such to their country, by whatever name they have been or may be still distinguished; and though in that number there should be men of whose past ingratitude, injustice, or malice, I might complain, on my own account, with the greatest reason. These I will never renounce. In their prosperity they shall never hear of me, in their distress always. In that retreat, wherein the remainder of my days shall be spent, I may be of some use to them; since even from thence I may advise, exhort, and warn them.

'Nec enim is solus reipublicæ prodest, qui candidatos extrahit, et tue-tur reos, et de pace, belloque censet; sed qui juventutem exhortatur, 'qui, in tanta bonorum præceptorum inopia, virtute instruit animos; 'qui ad pecuniam luxuriamque cursu ruentes, prensat ac retrahit, et, si 'nihil aliud, certe moratur; in privato publicum negotium agit.'

My intention is not to introduce what I have to say concerning the duties of kings, by any nice inquiry into the original of their institution. What is to be known of it will appear plainly enough, to such as are able and can spare time to trace it, in the broken traditions which are come down to us of a few nations. But those, who are not able to trace it there, may trace something better and more worthy to be known, in their own thoughts; I mean what this institution ought to have been, whenever it began, according to the rule of reason, founded in the common rights and interests of mankind. On this head it is quite necessary to make some reflections, that will, like angular stones laid on a rock, support the little fabric, the model however of a great building that I propose to raise.

So plain a matter could never have been rendered intricate and voluminous, had it not been for lawless ambition, extravagant vanity, and the detestable spirit of tyranny, abetted by the private interests of artful men; if authority had not imposed on such as did not pretend to reason; and if such as did attempt to reason had not been caught in the common snares of sophism, and bewildered in the labyrinths of disputation. In this case, therefore, as in all those of great concernment, the shortest and the surest method of arriving at real knowledge is to unlearn the lessons we may have been taught, and to remount to first principles.

Now he who does so in this case, will discover soon that the notions concerning the divine institution and right of kings, as well as the absolute power belonging to their office, have no foundation in fact or reason, but have risen from an old alliance between ecclesiastical and civil policy. The characters of king and priest have been sometimes blended together; and when they have been divided, as kings have found the great effects wrought in government by ^t

empire which priests obtain over the consciences of mankind, so priests have been taught by experience, that the best method to preserve their own rank, dignity, wealth, and power, all raised upon a supposed divine right, is to communicate the same pretension to kings, and, by a fallacy common to both, impose their usurpations on a silly world. This they have done; and, in the state as in the church, these pretensions to a divine right have been generally carried highest by those who have had the least pretension to the divine favour.

It is worth while to observe on what principle some men were advanced to a great pre-eminence over others, in the early ages of those nations that are a little known to us; I speak not of such as raised themselves by conquest, but of such as were raised by common consent. Now you will find in all these proceedings, an entire uniformity of principle. The authors of such inventions, as were of general use to the well-being of mankind, were not only revered and obeyed during their lives, but worshipped after their deaths; they became principal gods, ‘Dii majorum gentium.’ The founders of commonwealths, the lawgivers, and the heroes of particular states, became gods of a second class, ‘Dii minorum gentium.’ All pre-eminence was given in heaven as well as on earth, in proportion to the benefits that men received. Majesty was the first, and divinity the second reward. Both were earned by services done to mankind, whom it was easy to lead, in those days of simplicity and superstition, from admiration and gratitude, to adoration and expectation.

When advantage had been taken by some particular men of these dispositions in the generality, and religion and government were become two trades or mysteries, new means of attaining to this pre-eminence were soon devised, and new and even contrary motives worked the same effect. Merit had given rank; but rank was soon kept, and, which is more preposterous, obtained too without merit. Men were then made kings for reasons as little relative to good government, as the neighing of the horse of the son of Hystaspes.

But the most prevalent and the general motive was proximity of blood to the last, not to the best king. Nobility in China mounts upwards; and he who has it conferred upon him, ennobles his ancestors, not his posterity. A wise institution! and especially among a people in whose minds a great veneration for their forefathers has been always carefully maintained. But in China, as well as in most other countries, royalty has descended, and kingdoms have been reckoned the patrimonies of particular families.

I have read in one of the historians of the latter Roman empire, historians, by the way, whom I will not advise others to misspend their time in reading, that Sapor, the famous king of Persia, against whom Julian made the expedition wherein he lost his life, was crowned in his mother's womb. His father left her with child; the magi

declared that the child would be a male; whereupon the royal ensigns were brought forth, they were placed on her majesty's belly, and the princes and the satraps prostrate recognised the embryo-monarch. But to take a more known example, out of multitudes that present themselves: Domitian, the worst, and Trajan, the best of princes, were promoted to the empire by the same title. Domitian was the son of Flavius, and the brother, though possibly the poisoner too, of Titus Vespasian; Trajan was the adopted son of Nerva. Hereditary right served the purpose of one as well as of the other; and if Trajan was translated to a place among the gods, this was no greater a distinction than some of the worst of his predecessors obtained, for reasons generally as good as that which Seneca puts into the mouth of Diespiter in the *Apokolokyntosis* of Claudius: ‘*Cum sit e republica esse aliquem, qui cum Romulo possit ferventia rapa vorare.*’ To say the truth, it would have been wise to have made these royal persons gods at once: as gods they would have done neither good nor hurt; but as emperors, in their way to divinity, they acted like devils.

If my readers are ready by this time to think me antimonarchical, and in particular an enemy to the succession of kings by hereditary right, I hope to be soon restored to their good opinion. I esteem monarchy above any other form of government, and hereditary monarchy above elective. I reverence kings, their office, their rights, their persons; and it will never be owing to the principles I am going to establish, because the character and government of a Patriot King can be established on no other, if their office and their right are not always held divine and their persons always sacred.

Now, we are subject, by the constitution of human nature, and therefore by the will of the Author of this and every other nature, to two laws. One given immediately to all men by God, the same to all, and obligatory alike on all. The other given to man by man, and therefore not the same to all, nor obligatory alike on all; founded, indeed, on the same principles, but varied by different applications of them to times, to characters, and to a number, which may be reckoned infinite, of other circumstances. By the first I mean the universal law of reason; and by the second, the particular law, or constitution of laws, by which every distinct community has chosen to be governed.

The obligation of submission to both is discoverable by so clear and so simple a use of our intellectual faculties, that it may be said properly enough to be ‘revealed to us by God;’ and though both these laws cannot be said properly to be given by Him, yet our obligation to submit to the civil law is a principal paragraph in the natural law, which He has most manifestly given us. In truth we can no more doubt of the obligations of both these laws, than of the existence of the lawgiver. As supreme Lord over all His works, His general providence regards immediately the great commonwealth of

kind ; but then, as supreme lord likewise, His authority gives a sanction to the particular bodies of law which are made under it. The law of nature is the law of all His subjects ; the constitutions of particular governments are like the bye-laws of cities, or the appropriated customs of provinces. It follows, therefore, that he who breaks the laws of his country resists the ordinance of God, that is, the law of His nature. God has instituted neither monarchy, nor aristocracy, nor democracy, nor mixed government ; but though God has instituted no particular form of government among men, yet by the general laws of His kingdom He exacts our obedience to the laws of those communities to which each of us is attached by birth, or to which we are attached by a subsequent and lawful engagement.

From such plain, unrefined, and therefore, I suppose, true reasoning, the just authority of kings and the due obedience of subjects may be deduced with the utmost certainty. And surely it is far better for kings themselves to have their authority thus founded on principles incontestable, and on fair deductions from them, than on the chimeras of madmen, or, what has been more common, the sophisms of knaves. A human right that cannot be controverted is preferable, surely, to a pretended divine right which every man must believe implicitly, as few will do, or not believe at all.

But the principles we have laid down do not stop here. A divine right in kings is to be deduced evidently from them ; a divine right to govern well, and conformably to the constitution at the head of which they are placed. A divine right to govern ill is an absurdity ; to assert it is blasphemy. A people may choose, or hereditary succession may raise, a bad prince to the throne ; but a good king alone can derive his right to govern from God. The reason is plain ; good government alone can be in the divine intention. God has made us to desire happiness ; He has made our happiness dependent on society ; and the happiness of society dependent on good or bad government. His intention, therefore, was, that government should be good.

This is essential to His wisdom ; for wisdom consists surely in proportioning means to ends ; therefore it cannot be said without absurd impiety, that He confers a right to oppose His intention.

The office of kings is, then, of right divine, and their persons are to be reputed sacred. As men, they have no such right, no such sacredness belonging to them ; as kings, they have both, unless they forfeit them. Reverence for government obliges to reverence governors, who, for the sake of it, are raised above the level of other men ; but reverence for governors, independently of government, any further than reverence would be due to their virtues if they were private men, is preposterous, and repugnant to common sense. The spring from which this legal reverence, for so I may call it, arises, is national, not personal. As well might we say that a ship is built and loaded and manned for the

sake of any particular pilot, instead of acknowledging that the pilot is made for the sake of the ship, her lading, and her crew, who are always the owners in the political vessel; as to say that kingdoms were instituted for kings, not kings for kingdoms. In short, and to carry our allusion higher, majesty is not an inherent, but a reflected light.

All this is as true of hereditary as it is of elective monarchy; though the scribblers for tyranny, under the name of monarchy, would have us believe that there is something more august and more sacred in one than the other. They are sacred alike, and this attribute is to be ascribed or not ascribed to them as they answer or do not answer the ends of their institution. But there is another comparison to be made, in which a great and most important dissimilitude will be found between hereditary and elective monarchy. Nothing can be more absurd in pure speculation than an hereditary right in any mortal to govern other men; and yet, in practice, nothing can be more absurd than to have a king to choose at every vacancy of a throne. We draw at a lottery, indeed, in one case, where there are many chances to lose, and few to gain. But have we much more advantage of this kind in the other? I think not. Upon these, and upon most occasions, the multitude would do at least as well to trust to chance as choice, and to their fortune as to their judgment. But in another respect, the advantage is entirely on the side of hereditary succession; for, in elective monarchies, these elections, whether well or ill made, are often attended with such national calamities, that even the best reigns cannot make amends for them; whereas, in hereditary monarchy, whether a good or a bad prince succeeds, these calamities are avoided. There is one source of evil the less open; and one source of evil the less in human affairs, where there are so many, is sufficient to decide. We may lament the imperfections of our human state, which is such, that in cases of the utmost importance to the order and good government of society, and by consequence to the happiness of our kind, we are reduced, by the very constitution of our nature, to have no part to take that our reason can approve absolutely. But though we lament it, we must submit to it. We must tell ourselves once for all, that perfect schemes are not adapted to our imperfect state; that Stoical morals and Platonic politics are nothing better than amusements for those who have had little experience in the affairs of the world, and who have much leisure, ‘verba otiosorum senum ad imperitos juvenes;’ which was the censure, and a just one too, that Dionysius past on some of the doctrines of the father of the Academy. In truth, all that human prudence can do is to furnish expedients, and to compound, as it were, with general vice and folly; employing reason to act even against her own principles, and teaching us, if I may say so, ‘insanire cum ratione,’ which appears on many occasions not to be the paradox it has been thought.

To conclude this head therefore; as I think a limited monarchy the best of governments, so I think an hereditary monarchy the best of monarchies. I said a limited monarchy; for an unlimited monarchy, wherein arbitrary will, which is in truth no rule, is however the sole rule, or stands instead of all rule of government, must be allowed so great an absurdity, both in reason informed and uninformed by experience, that it seems a government fitter for savages than for civilized people.

But I think it proper to explain a little more what I mean, when I say a limited monarchy, that I may leave nothing untouched which ought to be taken into consideration by us, when we attempt to fix our ideas of a Patriot King.

Among many reasons which determine me to prefer monarchy to every other form of government, this is a principal one. When monarchy is the essential form, it may be more easily and more usefully tempered with aristocracy or democracy, or both, than either of them, when they are the essential forms, can be tempered with monarchy. It seems to me, that the introduction of a real permanent monarchical power, or anything more than the pageantry of it, into either of these, must destroy them and extinguish them, as a greater light extinguishes a less. Whereas it may easily be shown, and the true form of our government will demonstrate, without seeking any other example, that very considerable 'aristocratical and democratical powers' may be grafted on a monarchical stock, without diminishing the lustre, or restraining the power and authority of the prince, enough to alter in any degree the essential form.

A great difference is made in nature, and therefore the distinction should be always preserved in our notions, between two things that we are apt to confound in speculation, as they have been confounded in practice, legislative and monarchical power. There must be an absolute, unlimited, and uncontrollable power lodged somewhere in every government; but to constitute monarchy, or the government of a single person, it is not necessary that this power should be lodged in the monarch alone. It is no more necessary that he should exclusively and independently establish the rule of his government, than it is, that he should govern without any rule at all; and this surely will be thought reasonable by no man.

I would not say God governs by a rule that we know, or may know, as well as He, and upon our knowledge of which He appeals to men for the justice of His proceedings toward them. But this I may say, that God does always that which is fittest to be done, and that this fitness, whereof no created being is a competent judge, results from the various natures and more various relations of things; so that, as creator of all systems by which these natures and relations are constituted, He prescribed to himself the rule, which He follows as Governor of every

system of being. In short, with reverence be it spoken, God is a monarch, yet not an arbitrary but a limited monarch, limited by the rule which infinite wisdom prescribes to infinite power. I know well enough the impropriety of these expressions; but, when our ideas are inadequate, our expressions must needs be improper. Such conceptions, however, as we are able to form of these attributes, and of the exercise of them in the government of the universe, may serve to show what I have produced them to show. If governing without any rule, and by arbitrary will, be not essential to our idea of the monarchy of the Supreme Being, it is plainly ridiculous to suppose them necessarily included in the idea of a human monarchy; and though God, in His eternal ideas, for we are able to conceive no other manner of knowing, has prescribed to Himself that rule by which He governs the universe he created, it will be just as ridiculous to affirm, that the idea of human monarchy cannot be preserved, if kings are obliged to govern according to a rule established by the wisdom of a state, that was a state before they were kings, and by the consent of a people that they did not most certainly create; especially when the whole executive power is exclusively in their hands, and the legislative power cannot be exercised without their concurrence.

There are limitations indeed that would destroy the essential form of monarchy; or, in other words, a monarchical constitution may be changed, under pretence of limiting the monarch. This happened among us in the last century, when usurpation, and tyranny, were established over our nation, by some of the worst and some of the meanest men in it. I will not say, that the essential form of monarchy should be preserved though the preservation of it were to cause the loss of liberty. ‘*Salus reipublicæ suprema lex esto,*’ is a fundamental law; and, sure I am, the safety of a commonwealth is ill provided for, if the liberty be given up. But this I presume to say, and can demonstrate, that all the limitations necessary to preserve liberty, as long as the spirit of it subsists, and longer than that no limitations of monarchy, nor any other form of government, can preserve it, are compatible with monarchy. I think on these subjects neither as the tories nor as the whigs have thought; at least I endeavour to avoid the excesses of both. I neither dress up kings like so many burlesque Jupiters, weighing the fortunes of mankind in the scales of fate, and darting thunderbolts at the heads of rebellious giants; nor do I strip them naked, as it were, and leave them at most a few tattered rags to clothe their majesty, but such as can serve really as little for use as for ornament. My aim is to fix this principle; that limitations on a crown ought to be carried as far as it is necessary to secure the liberties of a people; and that all such limitations may subsist, without weakening or endangering monar-

I shall be told perhaps, for I have heard it said by many, that this point is imaginary ; and that limitations, sufficient to procure good government and to secure liberty under a bad prince, cannot be made, unless they are such as will deprive the subjects of many benefits in the reign of a good prince, clog his administration, maintain an unjust jealousy between him and his people, and occasion a defect of power, necessary to preserve the public tranquillity, and to promote the national prosperity. If this was true, here would be a much more melancholy instance of the imperfection of our nature, and of the inefficacy of our reason to supply this imperfection, than the former. In the former, reason prompted by experience, avoids a certain evil effectually, and is able to provide, in some measure, against the contingent evils that may arise from the expedient itself. But in the latter, if what is there advanced was true, these provisions against contingent evils would, in some cases, be the occasion of much certain evil, and of positive good in none ; under a good prince they would render the administration defective, and under a bad one there would be no government at all. But the truth is widely different from this representation. The limitations necessary to preserve liberty under monarchy will restrain effectually a bad prince, without being ever felt as shackles by a good one. Our constitution is brought, or almost brought, to such a point, a point of perfection I think it, that no king, who is not, in the true meaning of the word, a patriot, can govern Britain with ease, security, honour, dignity, or indeed with sufficient power and strength. But yet a king, who is a patriot, may govern with all the former ; and, besides them, with power as extended as the most absolute monarch can boast, and a power, too, far more agreeable in the enjoyment, as well as more effectual in the operation.

To attain these great and noble ends, the patriotism must be real, and not in show alone. It is something to desire to appear a patriot ; and the desire of having fame is a step towards deserving it, because it is a motive the more to deserve it. If it be true, as Tacitus says, ‘contemptu famæ contemni virtutem,’ that a contempt of a good name, or an indifference about it, begets or accompanies always a contempt of virtue, the contrary will be true ; and they are certainly both true. But this motive alone is not sufficient. To constitute a patriot, whether king or subject, there must be something more substantial than a desire of fame, in the composition ; and if there be not, this desire of fame will never rise above that sentiment which may be compared to the coquetry of women : a fondness of transient applause, which is courted by vanity, given by flattery, and spends itself in show, like the qualities which acquire it. Patriotism must be founded in great principles, and supported by great virtues. The chief of these principles I have endeavoured to trace ; and I will not scruple to assert, that a man can be a good king upon no other. He may,

without them and by complexion, be unambitious, generous, good-natured ; but, without them, the exercise even of these virtues will be often ill directed ; and, with principles of another sort, he will be drawn easily, notwithstanding these virtues, from all the purposes of his institution.

I mention these opposite principles the rather, because, instead of wondering that so many kings, unfit and unworthy to be trusted with the government of mankind, appear in the world, I have been tempted to wonder that there are any tolerable ; when I have considered the flattery that environs them most commonly from the cradle, and the tendency of all those false notions that are instilled into them by precept and by example, by the habits of courts and by the interested selfish views of courtiers. They are bred to esteem themselves of a distinct and superior species among men, as men are among animals.

Lewis XIV. was a strong instance of the effect of this education, which trains up kings to be tyrants, without knowing that they are so. That oppression under which he kept his people, during the whole course of a long reign, might proceed, in some degree, from the natural haughtiness of his temper ; but it proceeded, in a greater degree, from the principles and habits of his education. By this he had been brought to look on his kingdom as a patrimony that descended to him from his ancestors, and that was to be considered in no other light ; so that when a very considerable man had discoursed to him at large of the miserable condition to which his people was reduced, and had frequently used this word, 'l'etat ;' though the king approved the substance of all he had said, yet he was shocked at the frequent repetition of this word, and complained of it as a kind of indecency to himself. This will not appear so strange to our second, as it may very justly to our first reflections ; for what wonder is it, that princes are easily betrayed into an error that takes its rise in the general imperfection of our nature, in our pride, our vanity, and our presumption ? the bastard children, but the children still, of self-love ; a spurious brood, but often a favourite brood, that governs the whole family. As men are apt to make themselves the measure of all being, so they make themselves the final cause of all creation. Thus the reputed orthodox philosophers in all ages have taught, that the world was made for man, the earth for him to inhabit, and all the luminous bodies in the immense expanse around us, for him to gaze at. Kings do no more, no not so much, when they imagine themselves the final cause for which societies were formed, and governments instituted. /

This capital error, in which almost every prince is confirmed by his education, has so great extent and so general influence, that a right to do every iniquitous thing in government may be derived from it. But, as if this was not enough, the characters of prince

many more ways by their education. I shall not descend into a detail of such particulars, nor presume so much as to hint what regulations might be made about the education of princes, nor what part our parliaments might take occasionally in this momentous affair, lest I should appear too refining, or too presumptuous, in my speculations. But I may assert in general, that the indifference of mankind upon this head, especially in a government constituted like ours, is monstrous.

I may also take notice of another cause of the mistakes of princes, I mean the general conduct of those who are brought near to their persons. Such men, let me say, have a particular duty arising from this very situation; a duty common to them all, because it arises not from their stations, which are different, but from their situation, which is the same. To enumerate the various applications of this duty would be too minute and tedious; but this may suffice, that all such men should bear constantly in mind, that the master they serve is, or is to be, the king of their country; that their attachment to him, therefore, is not to be like that of other servants to other masters, for his sake alone, or for his sake and their own, but for the sake of their country likewise.

Craterus loves the king, but Hephestion loves Alexander, was a saying of the last that has been often quoted, but not censured as it ought to be. Alexander gave the preference to the attachment of Hephestion; but this preference was due undoubtedly to that of Craterus. Attachment to a private person must comprehend a great concern for his character and his interests: but attachment to one who is, or may be a king, much more; because the character of the latter is more important to himself and others; and because his interests are vastly more complicated with those of his country, and in some sort with those of mankind. Alexander himself seemed, upon one occasion, to make the distinction that should be always made between our attachments to a prince, and to any private person. It was when Parmenio advised him to accept the terms of peace which Darius offered; they were great, he thought them so; but he thought, no matter for my purpose whether justly or not, that it would be unbecoming him to accept them; therefore he rejected them, but acknowledged, that 'he would have done as 'he was advised to do, if he had been Parmenio.'

As to persons who are not about a prince in the situation here spoken of, they can do little more than proportion their applause, and the demonstrations of their confidence and affection, to the benefits they actually receive from the prince on the throne, or to the just expectations that a successor gives them. It is of the latter I propose to speak here particularly. If he gives them those of a good reign, we may assure ourselves that they will carry, and in this case they ought to carry, that applause, and those demonstrations of their confidence and

affection, as high as such a prince himself can desire. Thus the prince and the people take, in effect, a sort of engagement with one another; the prince to govern well, and the people to honour and obey him. If he gives them expectations, of a bad reign, they have this obligation to him at least, that he puts them early on their guard; and an obligation, and an advantage it will be, if they prepare for his accession as for a great and inevitable evil; and if they guard on every occasion against the ill use, they foresee, that he will make of money and power. Above all, they should not suffer themselves to be caught in the common snare, which is laid under specious pretences of 'gaining such a prince, 'and of keeping him by public compliances out of bad hands.' That argument has been pressed more than once, has prevailed, and has been fruitful of most pernicious consequences. None indeed can be more absurd. It is not unlike the reasoning of those savages who worship the devil, not because they love him or honour him, or expect any good from him, but that he may do them no hurt. Nay, it is more absurd; for the savages suppose that the devil has, independently of them, the power to hurt them; whereas the others put more power into the hands of a prince, because he has already some power to hurt them; and trust to the justice and the gratitude of one, who wants sense, virtue, or both, rather than increase and fortify the barriers against his folly and his vices.

But the truth is, that men who reason and act in this manner, either mean, or else are led by such as mean, nothing more than to make a private court at the public expense; who choose to be the instruments of a bad king rather than to be out of power; and who are often so wicked, that they would prefer such a service to that of the best of kings. In fine, these reasons, and every other reason for providing against a bad reign in prospect, acquire a new force, when one weak or wicked prince is, in the order of succession, to follow another of the same character. Such provisions indeed are hardest to be obtained when they are the most necessary; that is, when the spirit of liberty begins to flag in a free people, and when they become disposed, by habits that have grown insensibly upon them, to a base submission. But they are necessary too, even when they are easiest, to be obtained; that is, when the spirit of liberty is in full strength, and a disposition to oppose all instances of mal-administration, and to resist all attempts on liberty, is universal. In both cases the endeavours of every man who loves his country will be employed with incessant care and constancy to obtain them, that good government and liberty may be the better preserved and secured; but in the latter case for this further reason also, that the preservation and security of these may be provided for, not only better, but more consistently with public tranquillity, by constitutional methods, and a legal course of opposition to the excesses of regal or ministerial power.

What I touch upon here might be made extremely plain ; and I think the observation would appear to be of no small importance ; but I should be carried too far from my subject, and my subject will afford me matter of more agreeable speculation.

It is true that a prince who gives just reasons to expect that his reign will be that of a Patriot King, may not always meet, and from all persons, such returns as such expectations deserve ; but they must not hinder either the prince from continuing to give them, or the people from continuing to acknowledge them. United, none can hurt them ; and if no artifice interrupts, no power can defeat the effects of their perseverance. It will blast many a wicked project, keep virtue in countenance, and vice, to some degree at least, in awe. Nay, if it should fail to have these effects, if we should even suppose a good prince to suffer with the people, and in some measure for them, yet many advantages would accrue to him ; for instance, the cause of the people he is to govern, and his own cause, would be made the same by their common enemies. He would feel grievances himself as a subject, before he had the power of imposing them as a king. He would be formed in that school out of which the greatest and the best of monarchs have come, the school of affliction ; and all the vices which had prevailed before his reign, would serve as so many foils to the glories of it. But I hasten to speak of the greatest of all these advantages, and of that which a Patriot King will esteem to be such, whose ways of thinking and acting to so glorious a purpose as the re-establishment of a free constitution, when it has been ~~shook~~ by the iniquity of former administrations, I shall endeavour to explain.

What I have here said will pass among some for the reveries of a distempered brain, at least for the vain speculations of an idle man who has lost sight of the world, or who had never sagacity enough to discern in government the practicable from the impracticable. Will it not be said, that this is advising a king to rouse a spirit which may turn against himself ; to reject the sole expedient of governing a limited monarchy with success ; to labour to confine, instead of labouring to extend his power ; to patch up an old constitution, which his people are disposed to lay aside, instead of forming a new one more agreeable to them, and more advantageous to him ; to refuse, in short, to be an absolute monarch, when every circumstance invites him to it ? All these particulars, in every one of which the question is begged, will be thus represented, and will be then ridiculed as paradoxes fit to be ranked among the ‘mirabilia et inopinata’ of the Stoicks, and such as no man in his senses can maintain in earnest. These judgments and these reasonings may be expected in an age as futile and as corrupt as ours ; in an age wherein so many betray the cause of liberty, and act not only without regard but in direct opposition to the most important interests of their country ; not only occasionally, by surprise, by weak-

ness, by strong temptation, or sly seduction, but constantly, steadily, by deliberate choice, and in pursuance of principles they avow and propagate; in an age when so many others shrink from the service of their country, or promote it coolly and uncertainly, in subordination to their own interest and humour, or to those of a party; in an age, when to assert the truth is called spreading of delusion, and to assert the cause of liberty and good government, is termed sowing of sedition. But I have declared already my unconcernedness at the censure or the ridicule of such men as these; for whose supposed abilities I have much well-grounded contempt, and against whose real immorality I have as just indignation.

Let us come, therefore, to the bar of reason and experience, where we shall find these paradoxes admitted as plain and almost self-evident propositions, and these reveries and vain speculations as important truths, confirmed by experience in all ages and all countries.

Machiavel is an author who should have great authority with the persons likely to oppose me. He proposes to princes the amplification of their power, the extent of their dominion, and the subjection of their people, as the sole objects of their policy. He devises and recommends all means that tend to these purposes, without the consideration of any duty owing to God or man, or any regard to the morality or immorality of actions. Yet even he declares the affectation of virtue to be useful to princes; he is so far on my side in the present question. The only difference between us is, I would have the virtue real, he requires no more than the appearance of it.

In the tenth chapter of the first book of Discourses, he appears convinced, such is the force of truth, but how consistently with himself let others determine, that the supreme glory of a prince accrues to him who establishes good government and a free constitution; and that a prince, ambitious of fame, must wish to come into possession of a disordered and corrupted state, not to finish the wicked work that others have begun, and to complete the ruin, but to stop the progress of the first, and to prevent the last. He thinks this not only the true way to fame, but to security and quiet; as the contrary leads, for here is no third way, and a prince must make his option between these two, not only to infamy, but to danger and to perpetual disquietude. He represents those who might establish a commonwealth or a legal monarchy and who choose to improve the opportunity of establishing tyranny, that is, monarchy without any rule of law, as men who are deceived by false notions of good, and false appearances of glory, and who are in effect blind to their true interest in every respect; ‘ne si auvegono ‘per questo partito quanta fama, quanta gloria, quanto honore, sicurta, ‘quiete, con satisfazione d’animo è fuggono, et in quanta infamia, virtù ‘perio, biasimo, pericoloe inquietudine incorrono.’ He touches another advantage which patriot princes reap; and in that he contradicts flatly

the main point on which his half-taught scholars insist. He denies that such princes diminish their power by circumscribing it; and affirms, with truth on his side, that Timoleon, and others of the same character whom he had cited, possessed as great authority in their country, with every other advantage besides, as Dionysius or Phalaris had acquired, with the loss of all those advantages. Thus far Machiavell reasons justly; but he takes in only a part of his subject, and confines himself to those motives that should determine a wise prince to maintain liberty, because it is his interest to do so. He rises no higher than the consideration of mere interest, of fame, of security, of quiet, and of power, all personal to the prince; and by such motives alone even his favourite Borgia might have been determined to affect the virtues of a patriot prince; more than which this great doctor in political knowledge would not have required of him. But he is far from going up to that motive which should above all determine a good prince to hold this conduct, because it is his duty to do so; a duty that he owes to God by one law, and to his people by another. Now it is with this that I shall begin what I intend to offer concerning the system of principles and conduct by which a patriot king will govern himself and his people. I shall not only begin higher, but descend into more detail, and keep still in my eye the application of the whole to the constitution of Great Britain, even to the present state of our nation, and temper of our people.

I think enough has been already said, to establish the 'first and true principles of monarchical' and indeed of 'every other kind of government;' and I will say with confidence, that no principles but these, and such as these, can be advanced, which deserve to be treated seriously; though Mr. Locke condescended to examine those of Filmer, more out of regard to the prejudices of the time, than to the importance of the work. Upon such foundations we must conclude, that since men were directed by nature to form societies, because they cannot by their nature subsist without them, nor in a state of individuality; and since they were directed in like manner to establish governments, because societies cannot be maintained without them, nor subsist in a state of anarchy; the ultimate end of all governments is the good of the people, for whose sake they were made, and without whose consent they could not have been made. In forming societies, and submitting to government, men gave up part of that liberty to which they are all born, and all alike. But why? is government incompatible with a full enjoyment of liberty? By no means. But because popular liberty without government will degenerate into licence, as government without sufficient liberty will degenerate into tyranny, they are necessary to each other, good government to support legal liberty, and legal liberty to preserve good government.

I speak not here of people, if any such there are, who have been

savage or stupid enough to submit to tyranny by original contract; nor of those nations on whom tyranny has stolen as it were imperceptibly, or been imposed by violence, and settled by prescription. I shall exercise no political casuistry about the rights of such kings, and the obligations of such people. Men are to take their lots, perhaps, in governments as in climates, to fence against the inconveniences of both, and to bear what they cannot alter. But I speak of people who have been wise and happy enough to establish, and to preserve, free constitutions of government, as the people of this island have done. To these, therefore, I say, that their kings are under the most sacred obligations that human law can create, and divine law authorize, to defend and maintain, in the first place, and preferably to every other consideration, the freedom of such constitutions.

The good of the people is the ultimate and true end of government. Gouvernors are, therefore, appointed for this end, and the civil constitution which appoints them, and invests them with their power, is determined to do so by that law of nature and reason, which has determined the end of government, and which admits this form of government as the proper means of arriving at it. Now, the greatest good of a people is their liberty; and, in the case here referred to, the people has judged it so, and provided for it accordingly. Liberty is to the collective body, what health is to every individual body. Without health no pleasure can be tasted by man; without liberty no happiness can be enjoyed by society. The obligation, therefore, to defend and maintain the freedom of such constitutions, will appear most sacred to a Patriot King.

Kings who have weak understandings, bad hearts, and strong prejudices, and all these, as it often happens, inflamed by their passions, and rendered incurable by their self-conceit and presumption; such kings are apt to imagine, and they conduct themselves so as to make many of their subjects imagine, that the king and the people in free governments are rival powers, who stand in competition with one another, who have different interests, and must of course have different views; that the rights and privileges of the people are so many spoils taken from the right and prerogative of the crown; and that the rules and laws, made for the exercise and security of the former, are so many diminutions of their dignity, and restraints on their power.

A patriot king will see all this in a far different and much truer light. The constitution will be considered by him as one law, consisting of two tables, containing the rule of his government, and the measure of his subjects obedience; or as one system, composed of different parts and powers, but all duly proportioned to one another, and conspiring by their harmony to the perfection of the whole. He will make one, and but one, distinction between his rights and those of his people; he will look on his to be a trust, and theirs a

He will discern, that he can have a right to no more than is trusted to him by the constitution; and that his people, who had an original right to the whole by the law of nature, can have the sole indefeasible right to any part; and really have such a right to that part which they have reserved to themselves. In fine, the constitution will be reverenced by him as the law of God and of man; the force of which binds the king as much as the meanest of his subjects, and the reason of which binds him much more.

Thus he will think, and on these principles he will act, whether he come to the throne by immediate or remote election. I say remote; for in hereditary monarchies, where men are not elected, families are; and, therefore, some authors would have it believed, that when a family has been once admitted, and an hereditary right to the crown recognised in it, that right cannot be forfeited, nor that throne become vacant, as long as any heir of the family remains. How much more agreeable to truth and to common sense would these authors have written, if they had maintained, that every prince who comes to a crown in the course of succession, were he the last of five hundred, comes to it under the same conditions under which the first took it, whether expressed or implied; as well as under those, if any such there be, which have been since made by legal authority; and that royal blood can give no right, nor length of succession any prescription, against the constitution of a government? The first and the last hold by the same tenure.

I mention this the rather, because I have an imperfect remembrance that some scribbler was employed, or employed himself, to assert the hereditary right of the present family. A talk so unnecessary to any good purpose, that, I believe, a suspicion arose of its having been designed for a bad one. A Patriot King will never countenance such impertinent fallacies, nor deign to lean on broken reeds. He knows that his right is founded on the laws of God and man, that none can shake it but himself, and that his own virtue is sufficient to maintain it against all opposition.

I have dwelt the longer on the first and general principles of monarchical government, and have recurred the oftener to them, because it seems to me that they are the seeds of patriotism, which must be sown as soon as possible in the mind of a prince, lest their growth should be checked by luxuriant weeds, which are apt to abound in such soils, and under which no crop of kingly virtues can ever flourish. A prince, who does not know the true principles, cannot propose to himself the true ends, of government; and he, who does not propose them, will never direct his conduct steadily to them. There is not a deeper, nor a finer observation in all my Lord Bacon's works, than one which I shall apply and paraphrase on this occasion. The most compendious, the most noble, and the most effectual remedy,

which can be opposed to the uncertain and irregular motions of the human mind, agitated by various passions, allured by various temptations, inclining sometimes towards a state of moral perfection, and oftener, even in the best, towards a state of moral depravation, is this. We must choose betimes such virtuous objects as are proportioned to the means we have of pursuing them, and as belong particularly to the stations we are in, and to the duties of those stations. We must determine and fix our minds in such manner upon them, that the pursuit of them may become the business, and the attainment of them the end of our whole lives. Thus we shall imitate the great operations of nature, and not the feeble, slow, and imperfect operations of art. We must not proceed, in forming the moral character, as a statuary proceeds in forming a statue, who works sometimes on the face, sometimes on one part, and sometimes on another; but we must proceed, and it is in our power to proceed, as nature does in forming a flower, an animal, or any other of her productions; '*rudimenta partium omnium simul parit et producit.*' 'She throws out altogether, 'and at once, the whole system of every being, and the rudiments of all the parts.' The vegetable or the animal grows in bulk, and increases in strength; but is the same from the first. Just so our Patriot King must be a patriot from the first. He must be such in resolution, before he grows such in practice. He must fix at once the general principles and ends of all his actions, and determine that his whole conduct shall be regulated by them, and directed to them. When he has done this, he will have turned, by one great effort, the bent of his mind so strongly towards the perfection of a kingly character, that he will exercise with ease, and as it were by a natural determination, all the virtues of it; which will be suggested to him on every occasion by the principles wherewith his mind is imbued, and by those ends that are the constant objects of his attention.

Let us then see in what manner and with what effect he will do this, upon the greatest occasion he can have of exercising these virtues, the 'maintenance of liberty, and the re-establishment of a 'free constitution.'

The freedom of a constitution rests on two points. The orders of it are one; so Machiavel calls them, and I know not how to call them more significantly. He means not only the forms and customs, but the different classes and assemblies of men, with different powers and privileges attributed to them, which are established in the state. The spirit and character of the people are the other. On the mutual conformity and harmony of these the preservation of liberty depends. To take away, or essentially to alter the former, cannot be brought to pass, whilst the latter remains in original purity and vigour; nor can liberty be destroyed by this method, unless the attempt be made with a military force sufficient to conquer the nation, which would not

submit in this case till it was conquered, nor with much security to the conqueror even then. But these orders of the state may be essentially altered, and serve more effectually to the destruction of liberty, than the taking of them away would serve, if the spirit and character of the people are lost.

Now this method of destroying liberty is the most dangerous on many accounts, particularly on this ; that even the reign of the weakest prince, and the policy of the weakest ministry, may effect the destruction, when circumstances are favourable to this method. If a people is growing corrupt, there is no need of capacity to contrive, nor of insinuation to gain, nor of plausibility to seduce, nor of eloquence to persuade, nor of authority to impose, nor of courage to attempt. The most incapable, awkward, ungracious, shocking, profligate, and timorous wretches, invested with power, and masters of the purse, will be sufficient for the work, when the people are accomplices in it. Luxury is rapacious : let them feed it ; the more it is fed, the more profuse it will grow. Want is the consequence of profusion, venality of want, and dependence of venality. By this progression, the first men of a nation will become the pensioners of the last ; and he who has talents, the most implicit tool to him who has none. The distemper will soon descend, not indeed to make a deposit below, and to remain there, but to pervade the whole body.

It may seem a singular, but it is perhaps a true proposition, that such a king and such a ministry are more likely to begin, and to pursue with success, this method of destroying a free constitution of government, than a king and a ministry that were held in great esteem would be. This very esteem might put many on their guard against the latter ; but the former may draw from contempt the advantage of not being feared ; and an advantage this is in the beginning of corruption. Men are willing to excuse, not only to others but to themselves, the first steps they take in vice, and especially in vice that affects the public, and whereof the public has a right to complain. Those, therefore, who might withstand corruption in one case, from a persuasion that the consequence was too certain to leave them any excuse, may yield to it when they can flatter themselves, and endeavour to flatter others, that liberty cannot be destroyed, nor the constitution be demolished, by such hands as hold the sceptre, and guide the reins of the administration. But alas ! the flattery is gross, and the excuse without colour. These men may ruin their country, but they cannot impose on any, unless it be on themselves. Nor will even this imposition on themselves be long necessary. Their consciences will be soon seared by habit and by example ; and they who wanted an excuse to begin, will want none to continue and to complete, the tragedy of their country. Old men will outlive the shame of losing liberty, and young men will arise who know not that it ever

existed. A spirit of slavery will oppose and oppress the spirit of liberty, and seem at least to be the genius of the nation. Such too it will become in time, when corruption has once grown to this height, unless the progress of it can be interrupted.

How inestimable a blessing, therefore, must the succession of a Patriot King be esteemed in such circumstances as these, which would be a blessing, and a great one too, in any other? He, and he alone, can save a country whose ruin is so far advanced. The utmost that private men can do, who remain untainted by the general contagion, is to keep the spirit of liberty alive in a few breasts; to protest against what they cannot hinder, and to claim on every occasion what they cannot by their own strength recover.

Machiavel has treated, in the discourses before cited, this question, ‘whether, when the people are grown corrupt, a free government can ‘be maintained, if they enjoy it; or established, if they enjoy it not?’ And upon the whole matter he concludes for the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of succeeding in either case. It will be worth while to observe his way of reasoning. He asserts very truly, and proves by the example of the Roman commonwealth, that those orders which are proper to maintain liberty, whilst a people remain uncorrupt, become improper and hurtful to liberty when a people is grown corrupt. To remedy this abuse, new laws alone will not be sufficient. These orders, therefore, must be changed, according to him, and the constitution must be adapted to the depraved manners of the people. He shows that such a change in the orders and constituent parts of the government is impracticable, whether the attempt be made by gentle and slow, or by violent and precipitate measures; and from thence he concludes, that a free commonwealth can neither be maintained by a corrupt people, nor be established among them. But he adds, that ‘if ‘this can possibly be done, it must be done by drawing the constitution ‘to the monarchical form of government,’ acciochè quelli huomini i: ‘quali dalle leggi non possono essere corretti, fussero da una podestá, ‘in qualche modo, frenati.’ ‘That a corrupt people, whom law cannot ‘correct, may be restrained and corrected by a kingly power.’ Here is the hinge on which the whole turns.

Another advantage that a free monarchy has over all other forms of free government, besides the advantage of being more easily and more usefully tempered with aristocratical and democratical powers which is mentioned above, is this. Those governments are made up of different parts, and are apt to be disjointed by the shocks to which they are exposed; but a free monarchical government is more compact, because there is a part the more that keeps, like the key-stone of a vault, the whole building together. They cannot be mended in a state of corruption, they must be in effect constituted anew, and in that attempt they may be dissolved for ever; but this is not the case of a free

monarchy. To preserve liberty by new laws and new schemes of government, whilst the corruption of a people continues and grows, is absolutely impossible ; but to restore and preserve it under old laws and an old constitution, by reinfusing into the minds of men the spirit of this constitution, is not only possible, but is, in a particular manner, easy to a king. A corrupt commonwealth remains without remedy, though all the orders and forms of it subsist ; a free monarchical government cannot remain absolutely so, as long as the orders and forms of the constitution subsist. These alone are indeed nothing more than the dead letter of freedom or masks of liberty. In the first character they serve to no good purpose whatsoever ; in the second they serve to a bad one, because tyranny, or government by will, becomes more severe and more secure under their disguise than it would if it was barefaced and avowed. But, a king can, easily to himself and without violence to his people, renew the spirit of liberty in their minds, quicken this dead letter, and pull off this mask.

As soon as corruption ceases to be an expedient of government, and it will cease to be such as soon as a patriot king is raised to the throne, the panacea is applied ; the spirit of the constitution revives, of course ; and, as fast as it revives, the orders and forms of the constitution are restored to their primitive integrity, and become, what they were intended to be, real barriers against arbitrary power, not blinds nor masks under which tyranny may lie concealed. Depravation of manners exposed the constitution to ruin ; reformation will secure it. Men decline easily from virtue, for there is a devil too in the political system, a constant tempter at hand ; a Patriot King will want neither power nor inclination to cast out this devil, to make the temptation cease, and to deliver his subjects, if not from the guilt, yet from the consequence of their fall. Under him, they will not only cease to do evil, but learn to do well ; for, by rendering public virtue and real capacity the sole means of acquiring any degree of power or profit in the state, he will set the passions of their hearts on the side of liberty and good government. A Patriot King is the most powerful of all reformers, for he is himself a sort of standing miracle, so rarely seen and so little understood, that the sure effects of his appearance will be admiration and love in every honest breast, confusion and terror to every guilty conscience, but submission and resignation in all. A new people will seem to arise with a new king. Innumerable metamorphoses, like those which poets feign, will happen in very deed ; and while men are conscious that they are the same individuals, the difference of their sentiments will almost persuade them that they are changed into different beings.

But that we may not expect more from such a king than even he can perform, it is necessary to premise another general observation, after which I shall descend into some that will be more particular.

Absolute stability is not to be expected in anything human; for that which exists immutably exists alone necessarily, and this attribute of the Supreme Being can neither belong to man, nor to the works of man. The best instituted governments, like the best constituted animal bodies, carry in them the seeds of their destruction; and though they grow and improve for a time, they will soon tend visibly to their dissolution. Every hour they live is an hour the less that they have to live. All that can be done, therefore, to prolong the duration of a good government is to draw it back, on every favourable occasion, to the first good principles on which it was founded. When these occasions happen often, and are well improved, such governments are prosperous and durable. When they happen seldom, or are ill improved, these political bodies live in pain, or in languor, and die soon.

A patriot king affords one of the occasions I mention in a free monarchical state, and the very best that can happen. It should be improved, like snatches of fair weather at sea, to repair the damages sustained in the last storm, and to prepare to resist the next. For such a king cannot secure to his people a succession of princes like himself. He will do all he can towards it, by his example and by his instruction. But after all, the royal mantle will not convey the spirit of patriotism into another king, as the mantle of Elijah did the gift of prophecy into another prophet. The utmost he can do, and that which deserves the utmost gratitude from his subjects, is to restore good government, to revive the spirit of it, and to maintain and confirm both, during the whole course of his reign. The rest his people must do for themselves. If they do not, they will have none but themselves to blame: if they do, they will have the principal obligation to him. In all events, they will have been free men one reign the longer by his means, and perhaps more; since he will leave them better prepared and disposed to defend their liberties, than he found them.

This general observation being made, let us now descend, in some detail, to the particular steps and measures that such a king must pursue, to merit a nobler title than all those which many princes of the west, as well as the east, are so proud to accumulate.

First then, he must begin to govern as soon as he begins to reign. For the very first steps he makes in government will give the first impression, and as it were the presage of his reign; and may be of great importance in many other respects besides that of opinion and reputation. His first care will be, no doubt, to purge his court, and to call into the administration such men as he can assure himself will serve on the same principles on which he intends to govern.

As to the first point; if the precedent reign has been bad, we know how he will find the court composed. The men in power will be some of those adventurers, busy and bold, who thrust and crowd themselves early into the intrigue of party and the management of affairs of

state, often without true ability, always without true ambition, or even the appearances of virtue; who mean nothing more than what is called making a fortune, the acquisition of wealth to satisfy avarice, and of titles and ribands to satisfy vanity. Such as these are sure to be employed by a weak or a wicked king: they impose on the first, and are chosen by the last. Nor is it marvellous that they are so, since every other want is supplied in them by the want of good principles and a good conscience; and since these defects become ministerial perfections, in a reign when measures are pursued and designs carried on that every honest man will disapprove. All the prostitutes who set themselves to sale, all the locusts who devour the land, with crowds of spies, parasites, and sycophants, will surround the throne under the patronage of such ministers; and whole swarms of little, noisome, nameless insects will hum and buzz in every corner of the court. Such ministers will be cast off, and such abettors of a ministry will be chased away together, and at once, by a patriot king.

Some of them perhaps will be abandoned by him; not to party-fury, but to national justice; not to sate private resentments, and to serve particular interests, but to make satisfaction for wrongs done to their country, and to stand as examples of terror to future administrations. Clemency makes, no doubt, an amiable part of the character I attempt to draw; but clemency, to be a virtue, must have its bounds, like other virtues; and surely these bounds are extended enough by a maxim I have read somewhere, that frailties and even vices may be passed over, but not enormous crimes; '*multa donanda ingenii puto, sed donanda vitia, non portenta.*'

Among the bad company, with which such a court will abound, may be reckoned a sort of men too low to be much regarded, and too high to be quite neglected; the lumber of every administration, the furniture of every court. These gilt carved things are seldom answerable for more than the men on a chess-board, who are moved about at will, and on whom the conduct of the game is not to be charged. Some of these every prince must have about him. The pageantry of a court requires that he should; and this pageantry, like many other despicable things, ought not to be laid aside. But as much sameness as there may appear in the characters of this sort of men, there is one distinction that will be made whenever a good prince succeeds to the throne after an iniquitous administration; the distinction I mean is, between those who have affected to dip themselves deeply in precedent iniquities, and those who have had the virtue to keep aloof from them, or the good luck not to be called to any share in them. And thus much for the first point, that of purging his court.

As to the second, that of calling to his administration such men as he can assure himself will serve on the same principles on which he intends to govern, there is no need to enlarge much upon it. A good

prince will no more choose ill men, than a wise prince will choose fools. Deception in one case is indeed more easy than in the other; because a knave may be an artful hypocrite, whereas a silly fellow can never impose himself for a man of sense. And least of all, in a country like ours, can either of these deceptions happen, if any degree of the discernment of spirit be employed to choose. The reason is, because every man here, who stands forward enough in rank and reputation to be called to the councils of his king, must have given proofs beforehand of his patriotism, as well as of his capacity, if he has either, sufficient to determine his general character.

There is, however, one distinction to be made as to the capacity of ministers, on which I will insist a little; because I think it very important at all times, particularly so at this time; and because it escapes observation most commonly. The distinction I mean is that between a cunning man and a wise man; and this distinction is built on a manifest difference in nature, how imperceptible soever it may become to weak eyes, or to eyes that look at their object through the false medium of custom and habit. My lord Bacon says, that cunning is left-handed or crooked wisdom. I would rather say, that it is a part, but the lowest part, of wisdom; employed alone by some, because they have not the other parts to employ; and by some, because it is as much as they want, within those bounds of action which they prescribe to themselves, and sufficient to the ends that they propose. The difference seems to consist in degree and application, rather than in kind. Wisdom is neither left-handed, nor crooked; but the heads of some men contain little, and the hearts of others employ it wrong. To use my lord Bacon's own comparison, the cunning man knows how to pack the cards, the wise man how to play the game better; but it would be of no use to the first to pack the cards, if his knowledge stopped here, and he had no skill in the game; nor to the second to play the game better, if he did not know how to pack the cards, that he might unpack them by new shuffling. Inferior wisdom or cunning may get the better of folly; but superior wisdom will get the better of cunning. Wisdom and cunning have often the same objects; but a wise man will have more and greater in his view. The least will not fill his soul, nor ever become the principal there; but will be pursued in subserviency, in subordination at least, to the other. Wisdom and cunning may employ sometimes the same means too; but the wise man stoops to these means, and the other cannot rise above them. Simulation and dissimulation, for instance, are the chief arts of cunning; the first will be esteemed always by a wise man unworthy of him, and will be therefore avoided by him, in every possible case; for, to resume my lord Bacon's comparison, simulation is put on that we may look into the cards of another, whereas dissimulation intends nothing more than to hide our own. Simulation is a stiletto: not only

an offensive, but an unlawful weapon; and the use of it may be rarely, very rarely, excused, but never justified. Dissimulation is a shield, as secrecy is armour; and it is no more possible to preserve secrecy in the administration of public affairs without some degree of dissimulation, than it is to succeed in it without secrecy. Those two arts of cunning are like the alloy mingled with pure ore. A little is necessary, and will not debase the coin below its proper standard; but if more than that little be employed, the coin loses its currency and the coiner will lose his credit.

We may observe much the same difference between wisdom and cunning, both as to the objects they propose and to the means they employ, as we observe between the visual powers of different men. One sees distinctly the objects that are near to him, their immediate relations, and their direct tendencies; and a sight like this serves well enough the purpose of those who concern themselves no further. The cunning minister is one of those; he neither sees, nor is concerned to see, any further than his personal interests, and the support of his administration, require. If such a man overcomes any actual difficulty, avoids any immediate distress, or, without doing either of these effectually, gains a little time, by all the low artifice which cunning is ready to suggest and baseness of mind to employ, he triumphs, and is flattered by his mercenary train on the great event; which amounts often to no more than this, that he got into distress by one series of faults, and out of it by another. The wise minister sees, and is concerned to see further, because government has a further concern; he sees the objects that are distant as well as those that are near, and all their remote relations, and even their indirect tendencies. He thinks of fame as well as of applause, and prefers that which to be enjoyed must be given, to that which may be bought. He considers his administration as a single day in the great year of government; but as a day that is affected by those which went before, and that must affect those which are to follow. He combines, therefore, and compares all these objects, relations, and tendencies; and the judgment he makes on an entire not a partial survey of them, is the rule of his conduct. That scheme of the reason of state which lies open before a wise minister, contains all the great principles of government, and all the great interests of his country; so that, as he prepares some events, he prepares against others, whether they be likely to happen during his administration, or in some future time.

Many reflections might be added to these, and many examples be brought to illustrate them. Some I could draw from the men I have seen at the head of business, and make very strong contrasts of men of great wisdom with those of mere cunning. But I conclude this head, that I may proceed to another of no less importance.

To espouse no party, but to govern like the common father of his

people, is so essential to the character of a Patriot King, that he who does otherwise forfeits the title. It is the peculiar privilege and glory of this character, that princes who maintain it, and they alone, are so far from the necessity, that they are not exposed to the temptation, of governing by a party ; which must always end in the government of a faction ; the faction of the prince, if he has ability ; the faction of his ministers, if he has not ; and, either one way or other, in the oppression of the people. For faction is to party what the superlative is to the positive ; party is a political evil, and faction is the worst of all parties. The true image of a free people, governed by a Patriot King, is that of a patriarchal family, where the head and all the members are united by one common interest, and animated by one common spirit ; and wheré, if any are perverse enough to have another, they will be soon borne down by the superiority of those who have the same ; and, far from making a division, they will but confirm the union of the little state. That to approach as near as possible to these ideas of perfect government, and social happiness under it, is desirable in every state, no man will be absurd enough to deny. The sole question is, therefore, how near to them it is possible to attain ? For, if this attempt be not absolutely impracticable, all the views of a Patriot King will be directed to make it succeed. Instead of abetting the divisions of his people, he will endeavour to unite them, and to be himself the centre of their union ; instead of putting himself at the head of one party in order to govern his people, he will put himself at the head of his people in order to govern; or more properly to subdue, all parties. Now, to arrive at this desirable union, and to maintain it, will be found more difficult in some cases than in others, but absolutely impossible in none, to a wise and good prince.

If his people are united in their submission to him, and in their attachment to the established government, he must not only espouse but create a party, in order to govern by one ; and what should tempt him to pursue so wild a measure ? A prince, who aims at more power than the constitution gives him may be so tempted ; because he may hope to obtain in the disorders of the state what cannot be obtained in quiet times ; and because contending parties will give what a nation will not. Parties, even before they degenerate into absolute factions, are still numbers of men associated together for certain purposes, and certain interests, which are not, or which are not allowed to be, those of the community by others. A more private or personal interest comes but too soon, and too often, to be superadded, and to grow predominant in them ; and when it does so, whatever occasions or principles began to form them, the same logic prevails in them that prevails in every church. The interest of the state is supposed to be that of the party, as the interest of religion is supposed to be that of the church ; and with this pretence or prepossession, the int-

of the state becomes, like that of religion, a remote consideration, is never pursued for its own sake, and is often sacrificed to the other. A king, therefore, who has ill designs to carry on, must endeavour to divide a united people ; and by blending or seeming to blend his interests with that of a party, he may succeed perhaps, and his party and he may share the spoils of a ruined nation ; but such a party is then become a faction, such a king is a tyrant, and such a government is a conspiracy. A Patriot King must renounce his character, to have such designs ; or act against his own designs, to pursue such methods. Both are too absurd to be supposed. It remains, therefore, that as all the good ends of government are most attainable in a united state, and as the divisions of a people can serve to bad purposes alone, the king we suppose here will deem the union of his subjects his greatest advantage, and will think himself happy to find that established, which he would have employed the whole labour of his life to bring about. This seems so plain, that I am ready to make excuses for having insisted at all upon it.

Let us turn ourselves to another supposition, to that of a divided state. This will fall in oftener with the ordinary course of things in free governments, and especially after iniquitous and weak administrations. Such a state may be better or worse, and the great and good purposes of a patriot king more or less attainable in it, according to the different nature of those divisions ; and, therefore, we will consider this state in different lights.

A people may be united in submission to the prince, and to the establishment, and yet be divided about general principles, or particular measures of government. In the first case, they will strain their constitution, strain to their own notions and prejudices ; and if they cannot strain it, alter it as much as is necessary to render it conformable to them. In the second, they will support or oppose particular acts of administrations, and defend or attack the persons employed in them ; and both these ways a conflict of parties may arise, but no great difficulty to a prince who determines to pursue the union of his subjects and prosperity of his kingdoms, independently of party.

When parties are divided by different notions and principles concerning some particular ecclesiastical or civil institutions, the constitution, which should be their rule, must be that of the prince. He may and he ought to show his dislike or his favour, as he judges the constitution may be hurt or improved by one side or the other. The hurt he is never to suffer, not for his own sake, and therefore surely not for the sake of any whimsical, factious, or ambitious set of men. The improvement he must always desire ; but as every new modification in a scheme of government and of national policy is of great importance, and requires more and deeper consideration than the warmth and hurry and rashness of party-conduct admit, the duty of a prince seems

to require that he should render by his influence the proceedings more orderly and more deliberate, even when he approves the end to which they are directed. All this may be done by him without fomenting division; and, far from espousing a party, he will defeat party in defence of the constitution on some occasions, and lead men, from acting with a party spirit, to act with a national spirit on others.

When the division is about particular measures of government, and the conduct of the administration is alone concerned, a Patriot King will stand in want of party as little as in any other case. Under his reign, the opportunities of forming an opposition of this sort will be rare, and the pretences generally weak. Nay, the motives to it will lose much of their force when a government is strong in reputation, and men are kept in good humour by feeling the rod of a party on no occasion, though they feel the weight of the sceptre on some. Such opportunities, however, may happen; and there may be reason, as well as pretences, sometimes for opposition even in such a reign; at least we will suppose so, that we may include in this argument every contingent case. Grievances then are complained of, mistakes and abuses in government are pointed out, and ministers are prosecuted by their enemies. Shall the prince on the throne form a party by intrigue and by secret and corrupt influence to oppose the prosecution? When the prince and the ministers are participes criminis, when everything is to be defended, lest something should come out that may unravel the silly wicked scheme, and disclose to public sight the whole turpitude of the administration; there is no help, this must be done, and such a party must be formed, because such a party alone will submit to a drudgery of this kind. But a prince, who is not in these circumstances, will not have recourse to these means. He has others more open, more noble, and more effectual in his power; he knows that the views of his government are right, and that the tenor of his administration is good; but he knows that neither he nor his ministers are infallible nor impeccable. There may be abuses in his government, mistakes in his administration, and guilt in his ministers, which he has not observed; and he will be far from imputing the complaints, that gave him occasion to observe them, to a spirit of party; much less will he treat those who carry on such prosecutions in a legal manner as incendiaries and as enemies to his government. On the contrary, he will distinguish the voice of his people from the clamour of a faction, and will hearken to it. He will redress grievances, correct errors, and reform or punish ministers. This he will do as a good prince; and as a wise one he will do it in such a manner that his dignity shall be maintained, and that his authority shall increase with his reputation by it.

Should the efforts of a mere faction be bent to calumniate his government, and to distress the administration on groundless and for insufficient reasons, he will not neglect, but h

... contemptible scheme. He will, ... authors of mal-administration, ... effect to insinuate as much ... other circumstances than ... stand exposed, objects of general ... will remain eternally true, that ... segregated monarchy can never be ... convinced of the truth of this proposition, ... many well-grounded attacks have been ... directed against the most wicked and ... King of Britain has means enough ... opposition. But a Patriot King, ... cause on the innocence of his ... strength of the crown, and on ... whom he dares appeal, and by whom

... revisions of this kind, let me add ... question can hardly happen in a bad ... occasions of opposition must of ... have allowed that they may be given ... (a good reign); but that, whether it ... be that of the nation or that of a ... with respect to it will be the same; ... must have a very fatal event. Such ... constitution as long as he can resist the ... and therefore this opposition will ... constitution is in force and the spirit of ... change of his ministers, without ... be sufficient. The former with- ... would be deemed and taken for ... oppose on a factious principle; that I ... rata, and using it as ill, perhaps ... turn out of it. Now if such men as ... in the decline of a free government, ... changes or does not change his ministers, ... spirit, and are of a faction against the spirit ... His character may be too low, and that ... form originally even a faction that shall ... So they may apply to their purposes a party ... certain occasions, and bring numbers to fight ... of them would not have listed. The names, ... animosity, of parties may be kept up when the ... subsist no longer.

... revived or continued in the spirit of a faction, ... situated members of it will act without any re-

gard to right or wrong; and they who have asserted liberty in one reign, or opposed invasions of one kind, will give it up in another reign, and abet invasions of another kind; though they still distinguish themselves by the same appellation, still spread the same banner, and still deafen their adversaries and one another with the same cry. If the national cause prevails against all the wicked arts of corruption and division that an obstinate prince and flagitious ministry can employ; yet will the struggle be long, and the difficulties, the distresses, and the danger great, both to the king and to the people. The best he can hope for, in such a case, will be to escape with a diminution of his reputation, authority, and power. He may be exposed to something worse, and his obstinacy may force things to such extremities as they who oppose him will lament, and as the preservation of liberty and good government can alone justify. If the wicked arts I speak of prevail, faction will be propagated through the whole nation, an ill or well-grounded opposition will be the question no longer, and the contest among parties will be who shall govern, not how they shall be governed. In short, universal confusion will follow, and a complete victory on any side will enslave all sides.

I have not overcharged the draught. Such consequences must follow such a conduct; and, therefore, let me ask, how much more safe, more easy, more pleasant, more honourable is it, for a prince to correct, if he has not prevented, mal-administration? that he may be able to rest his cause, as I said before, on the strength of the crown and the concurrence of his people, whenever any faction may presume to rise in opposition to him.

This a Patriot King will do. He may favour one party and discourage another upon occasions wherein the state of his kingdom makes such a temporary measure necessary; but he will espouse none, much less will he proscribe any. He will list no party, much less will he do the meanest and most imprudent thing a king can do, list himself in any. It will be his aim to pursue true principles of government independently of all; and by a steady adherence to this measure, his reign will become an ~~undeniable~~ and glorious proof that a wise and good prince may unite his subjects, and be himself the centre of their union, notwithstanding any of these party divisions that have been hitherto mentioned.

Let us now view the divided state of a nation in another light. In this the divisions will appear more odious, more dangerous; less dependent on the influence, and less subject to the authority, of the crown. Such will be the state whenever a people is divided about submission to their prince, and a party is formed of spirit and strength sufficient to oppose, even in arms, the established government. But in this case, desperate as it may seem, a Patriot King will ^{be} of reconciling and reuniting his subjects to himself an

He may be obliged, perhaps, as Henry IV. of France was, to conquer his own; but then, like that great prince, if he is the conqueror, he will be the father too, of his people. He must pursue in arms those who presume to take arms against him; but he will pursue them like rebellious children whom he seeks to reclaim, and not like irreconcileable enemies whom he endeavours to exterminate. Another prince may blow up the flame of civil war by unprovoked severity, render those zealous against him who were at worst indifferent, and determine the disaffection of others to open rebellion. When he has prevailed against the faction he helped to form, as he could not have prevailed if the bent of the nation had been against him, he may be willing to ascribe his success to a party, that he may have that pretence to govern by a party; and far from reconciling the minds that have been alienated from him, and re-uniting his subjects in a willing, unforced submission to him, he may be content to maintain himself on that throne where the laws of God and man have placed him, by the melancholy expedient that usurpers and tyrants, who have no other in their power, employ: the expedient of force. But a Patriot King will act with another spirit and entertain nobler and wiser views from first to last, and through the whole course of such a conjuncture. Nothing less than the hearts of his people will content such a prince, nor will he think his throne established till it is established there. That he may have time and opportunity to gain them, therefore, he will prevent the flame from breaking out, if by art and management he can do it. If he cannot, he will endeavour to keep it from spreading; and if the frenzy of rebellion disappoints him in both these attempts, he will remember peace, like the heroic king I just now quoted, in the midst of war. Like him he will forego advantages of pushing the latter, rather than lose an opportunity of promoting the former; like him, in the heat of battle he will spare, and in the triumph of victory condescend; like him, he will beat down the violence of this flame by his valour, and extinguish even the embers of it by his lenity.

It may happen, that a prince, capable of holding such a conduct as this, may not have the opportunity. He may succeed to the throne after a contrary conduct has been held; and when, among other divisions which mal-administration and the tyranny of faction have increased and confirmed, there is one against the established government still in being, though not still in arms. The use is obvious, which a faction in power might make of such a circumstance under a weak prince, by ranking in that division all those who opposed the administration; or at least by holding out equal danger to him from two quarters, from their enemies who meant him no harm, and from his enemies who could do him none. But so gross an artifice will not impose on a prince of another character; he will soon discern the distinctions it becomes him to make. He will see, in this instance,

how faction breeds, nourishes, and perpetuates faction ; he will observe how far that of the court contributed to form the other, and contributes still to keep it in countenance and credit, among those who consider more what such men are against, than what they are for. He will observe, how much that of the disaffected gives pretence to the other who keeps a monopoly of power and wealth ; one of which oppresses, and the other beggars, the rest of the nation. His penetration will soon discover, that these factions break in but little on the body of his people, and that it depends on him alone to take from them even the strength they have ; because that of the former is acquired entirely by his authority and purse, and that of the latter principally by the abuse which the former makes of both. Upon the whole, the measures he has to pursue towards the great object of a Patriot King, the union of his people, will appear to him extremely easy. How should they be otherwise ? One of the factions must be dissolved, the moment that the favour of the prince is withdrawn ; and the other is disarmed, as soon as it is marked out. It will have no shelter, and it must therefore be so marked out, under a good and wise administration ; for, whether the members of it avow their principles by refusing those tests of fidelity which the law requires, or perjure themselves by taking them, they will be known alike. One difference, and but one will be made between them in the general sense of mankind, a difference arising from the greater degree of infamy that will belong justly to the latter. The first may pass for fools ; the latter must pass, and that without excuse, for knaves.

The terms I use sound harshly, but the censure is just ; and it will appear to be so in the highest degree, and upon the highest reason, if we stop to make a reflection or two, that deserve very well to be made on the conduct of our Jacobites ; for I desire no stronger instance on which to establish the censure, and to justify the terms I have used. Now all these, whether they swear or whether they do not, are liable to one particular objection, that did not lie against those who were in former days enemies to the king on the throne. In the days of York and Lancaster, for instance, a man might be against the prince on the throne without being against the constitution of his country. The constitution conveyed the crown by hereditary right in the same family ; and he who was a Yorkist and he who was a Lancastrian might, and I doubt not did, pretend in every contest to have this right on his side. The same constitution was acknowledged by both ; and therefore, so much indulgence was shown by law to both, at least in the time of Henry VII., that submission to a king *de facto* could not be imputed as a crime to either. Thus again to descend lower in history, when the exclusion of the Duke of York was pressed in the reign of Charles II., the right of that prince to the crown was not disputed. His divine right indeed, such a divine right as his grandfather

and father had asserted before him, was not much regarded ; but his right by the constitution, his legal right, was sufficiently owned by those who insisted on a law as necessary to bar it. But every Jacobite at this time goes beyond all these examples, and is a rebel to the constitution under which he is born, as well as to the prince on the throne. The law of his country has settled the right of succession in a new family. He resists this law, and asserts on his own private authority, not only a right in contradiction to it, but a right extinguished by it. This absurdity is so great, that it cannot be defended, except by advancing a greater ; and therefore it is urged that no power on earth could alter the constitution in this respect, nor extinguish a right to the crown inherent in the Stuart family, and derived from a superior, that is, from a Divine authority. This kind of plea for refusing submission to the laws of the land, if it was admitted, would serve any purpose as well as that for which it is brought. Our fanatics urged it formerly, and I do not see why a conscientious fifth monarchy man had not as much right to urge it formerly, as a Jacobite has now. But if conscience, that is private opinion, may excuse the fifth monarchy man and the Jacobite, who act conformably to it, from all imputations except those of madness and folly, how shall the latter be excused when he forswears the principles he retains, acknowledges the right he renounces, takes oath with an intent to violate them, and calls God to witness to a premeditated lie? Some casuistry has been employed to excuse these men to themselves and to others. But such casuistry, and in truth every other, destroys, by distinctions and exceptions all morality, and effaces the essential difference between right and wrong, good and evil. This the schoolmen in general have done on many occasions ; the sons of Loyola in particular. Some political reasoning has been employed, as well as the casuistry here spoken of, and to the same purpose. It has been said, that the conduct of those who are enemies to the establishment to which they submit and swear, is justified by the principles of the revolution. But nothing can be more false and frivolous. By the principles of the revolution, a subject may resist, no doubt, the prince who endeavours to ruin and enslave his people, and may push this resistance to the dethronement and exclusion of him and his race ; but will it follow, that because we may justly take arms against a prince whose right to govern we once acknowledged, and who by subsequent acts has forfeited that right, we may swear to a right we do not acknowledge, and resist a prince whose conduct has not forfeited the right we swore to, nor has given us any just dispensation from our oaths ?

But I shall lengthen this digression no further ; it is on a subject I have treated in public writings, the refutation of which never came to my hands, and, I think, never will. I return to the subject of my present discourse. And I say, that such factions as these can never

create any obstruction to a prince who pursues the union of his subjects, nor disturb the peace of his government. The men who compose them must be desperate and impotent ; the most despicable of all characters when they go together. Every honest and sensible man will distinguish himself out of their number ; and they will remain, as they deserve to be, hewers of wood and drawers of water to the rest of their fellow-subjects.

They will remain such, if they are abandoned to themselves, and to that habitual infatuation which they have not sense and spirit enough to break. But if a prince, out of goodness or policy, should think it worth his while to take them from under this influence, and to break these habits, even this division, the most absurd of all others, will not be found incurable. A man who has not seen the inside of parties, nor had opportunities to examine nearly their secret motives, can hardly conceive how little a share principle of any sort, though principle of some sort or other be always pretended, has in the determination of their conduct. Reason has small effect on numbers. A turn of imagination, often as violent and as sudden as a gust of wind, determines their conduct ; and passion is taken, by others, and by themselves too, when it grows into habit especially, for principle. What gave strength and spirit to a Jacobite party after the late king's accession ? The true answer is, A sudden turn of the imaginations of a whole party to resentment and rage, that were turned a little before to quiet submission, and patient expectation. Principle had as little share in making the turn, as reason had in conducting it. Men who had sense, and temper too, before that moment, thought of nothing after it but of setting up a tory king against a whig king ; and when some of them were asked, if they were sure a popish king would make a good tory king ? or whether they were determined to sacrifice their religion and liberty to him ? the answer was, No ; that they would take arms against him if he made attempts on either ; that this might be the case, perhaps, in six months after his restoration, but that, in the mean time, they would endeavour his restoration. This is no exaggerated fact ; and I leave all men to judge, to what such sentiments and conduct must be ascribed, to principle or passion, to reason or madness ? What gives obstinacy without strength, and sullenness without spirit, to the Jacobite-tories at this time ? Another turn of imagination, or rather the same showing itself in another form ; a factious habit, and a factious notion, converted into a notion of policy and honour. They are taught to believe, that by clinging together they are a considerable weight, which may be thrown in to turn the scale in any great event ; and that, in the mean time, to be a steady suffering party is an honour they may flatter themselves with very justly. Thus, they continue steady to engagements which most of them wish in their hearts they had never taken ; and suffer for

principles, in support of which not one of them would venture further than talking the treason that claret inspires.

It results, therefore, from all that has been said, and from the reflections which these hints may suggest, that in whatever light we view the divided state of a people, there is none in which these divisions will appear incurable, nor a union of the members of a great community with one another, and with their head, unattainable. It may happen in this case, as it does in many others, that things uncommon may pass for improbable or impossible ; and, as nothing can be more uncommon than a Patriot King, there will be no room to wonder if the natural and certain effects of his conduct should appear improbable or impossible to many. But there is still something more in this case. Though the union we speak of be so much for the interest of every king and every people, that their glory and their prosperity must increase, or diminish, in proportion as they approach nearer to it, or are further removed from it ; yet is there another interest, by which princes and people both are often imposed upon so far as to mistake it for their own. The interest I mean is that of private ambition. It would be easy to show in many instances, and particularly in this, of uniting instead of dividing, and of governing by a national concurrence instead of governing by the management of parties and factions in the state, how widely different, nay how repugnant, the interests of private ambition and those of real patriotism are. Men, therefore, who are warmed by the first, and have no sense of the last, will declare for division, as they do for corruption, in opposition to union and to integrity of government. They will not indeed declare directly, that the two former are in the abstract preferable ; but they will affirm, with great airs of sufficiency, that both are incurable ; and conclude from hence, that in practice it is necessary to comply with both. This subterfuge once open, there is no false and immoral measure in political management which may not be avowed and recommended. But the very men who hope to escape by opening it, shut it up again, and secure their own condemnation, when they labour to confirm divisions, and to propagate corruption, and thereby to create the very necessity that they plead in their excuse. Necessity of this kind there is in reality none ; for it seems full as absurd to say, that popular divisions must be cultivated, because popular union cannot be procured, as it would be to say that poison must be poured into a wound, because it cannot be healed. The practice of morality, in private life, will never arrive at ideal perfection ; must we give up ourselves, therefore, to all manner of immorality ? and must those who are charged with our instruction endeavour to make us the most profligate of men, because they cannot make us saints ?

Experience of the depravity of human nature made men desirous to unite in society and under government, that they might defend them-

selves the better against injuries; but the same depravity soon inspired to some the design of employing societies to invade and spoil societies, and to disturb the peace of the great commonwealth of mankind with more force and effect in such collective bodies than they could do individually. Just so it happens in the domestic economy of particular states, and their peace is disturbed by the same passions. Some of their members content themselves with the common benefits of society, and employ all their industry to promote the public good; but some propose to themselves a separate interest; and, that they may pursue it the more effectually, they associate with others. Thus factions are in them what nations are in the world; they invade and rob one another; and, while each pursues a separate interest, the common interest is sacrificed by them all; that of mankind in one case, that of some particular community in the other. This has been, and must always be, in some measure the course of human affairs, especially in free countries, where the passions of men are less restrained by authority; and I am not wild enough to suppose that a Patriot King can change human nature. But I am reasonable enough to suppose that, without altering human nature, he may give a check to this course of human affairs in his own kingdom at least; that he may defeat the designs and break the spirit of faction, instead of partaking in one and assuming the other; and that, if he cannot render the union of his subjects universal, he may render it so general as to answer all the ends of good government,—private security, public tranquillity, wealth, power, and fame.

If these ends were ever answered, they were so, surely, in this country, in the days of our Elizabeth. She found her kingdom full of factions, and factions of another consequence and danger than these of our days, whom she would have dispersed with a puff of her breath. She could not reunite them, it is true; the papist continued a papist, the puritan a puritan; one furious, the other sullen. But she united the great body of the people in her and their common interest; she inflamed them with one national spirit; and, thus armed, she maintained tranquillity at home and carried succour to her friends and terror to her enemies abroad. There were cabals at her court and intrigues among her ministers. It is said, too, that she did not dislike that there should be such; but these were kept within her court. They could not creep abroad to sow division among her people; and her greatest favourite, the Earl of Essex, paid the price of attempting it with his head. Let our great doctors in politics who preach so learnedly on the trite text *Divide et impera*, compare the conduct of Elizabeth in this respect, with that of her successor, who endeavoured to govern his kingdom by the notions of a faction that he raised, and to manage his parliament by undertakers; and they must be very obstinate indeed if they refuse to acknowledge that a wise and good prince

can unite a divided people, though a weak and wicked prince cannot; and that the consequences of national union are glory and happiness to the prince and to the people; whilst those of disunion bring shame and misery on both, and entail them too on posterity.

I have dwelt long on the last head, not only because it is of great importance in itself and at all times, but because it is rendered more so than ever at this time by the unexampled avowal of contrary principles. Hitherto it has been thought the highest pitch of profligacy to own, instead of concealing, crimes; and to take pride in them, instead of being ashamed of them. But in our age men have soared to a pitch still higher. The first is common, it is the practice of numbers, and by their numbers they keep one another in countenance. But the choice spirits of these days, the men of mode in politics, are far from stopping where criminals of all kinds have stopped, when they have gone even to this point; for generally the most hardened of the inhabitants of Newgate do not go so far. The men I speak of contend that it is not enough to be vicious by practice and habit, but that it is necessary to be so by principle. They make themselves missionaries of faction as well as of corruption; they recommend both, they deride all such as imagine it possible or fit to retain truth, integrity, and a disinterested regard to the public in public life, and pronounce every man a fool who is not ready to act like a knave. I hope that enough has been said, though much more might have been said, to expose the wickedness of these men and the absurdity of their schemes; and to show that a Patriot King may walk more easily and successfully in other paths of government, ‘per tutum planumque iter religionis, justitiae, honestatis, virtutumque moralium.’ Let me proceed, therefore, to mention two other heads of the conduct that such a king will hold, and it shall be my endeavour not to fall into the same prolixity.

A king who esteems it his duty to support, or to restore, if that be needful, the free constitution of a limited monarchy; who forms and maintains a wise and good administration; who subdues faction and promotes the union of his people; and who makes their greatest good the constant object of his government,—may be said, no doubt, to be in the true interest of his kingdom. All the particular cases that can arise are included in these general characteristics of a wise and good reign. And yet it seems proper to mention, under a distinct head, some particular instances that have not been touched, wherein this wisdom and goodness will exert themselves.

Now though the true interests of several states may be the same in many respects, yet is there always some difference to be perceived, by a discerning eye, both in these interests and in the manner of pursuing them; a difference that arises from the situation of countries, from the character of people, from the nature of government, and even from that of climate and soil; from circumstances that are, like these, perma-

nent, and from others that may be deemed more accidental. To illustrate all this by examples would be easy but long. I shall content myself therefore to mention, in some instances only, the difference that arises, from the causes referred to, between the true interests of our country, and that of some or all of our neighbours on the continent; and leave others to extend and apply in their own thoughts the comparison I shall hint at, rather than enlarge upon.

The situation of Great Britain, the character of her people, and the nature of her government, fit her for trade and commerce. Her climate and her soil make them necessary to her well-being. By trade and commerce we grow a rich and powerful nation, and by their decay we are growing poor and impotent. As trade and commerce enrich, so they fortify our country. The sea is our barrier, ships are our fortresses, and the mariners, that trade and commerce alone can furnish, are the garrisons to defend them. France lies under great disadvantages in trade and commerce, by the nature of her government. Her advantages in situation are as great at least as ours. Those that arise from the temper and character of her people are a little different perhaps, and yet upon the whole equivalent. Those of her climate and her soil are superior to ours, and indeed to those of any European nation. The United Provinces have the same advantages that we have in the nature of their government, more perhaps in the temper and character of their people, less to be sure in their situation, climate, and soil. But without descending into a longer detail of the advantages and disadvantages attending each of these nations in trade and commerce, it is sufficient for my present purpose to observe, that Great Britain stands in a certain middle between the other two with regard to wealth and power arising from these springs. A less, and a less constant, application to the improvement of these may serve the ends of France; a greater is necessary in this country, and a greater still in Holland. The French may improve their natural wealth and power by the improvement of trade and commerce. We can have no wealth nor power by consequence, as Europe is now constituted, without the improvement of them, nor in any degree but proportionably to this improvement. The Dutch cannot subsist without them. They bring wealth to other nations, and are necessary to the well-being of them; but they supply the Dutch with food and raiment, and are necessary even to their being.

The result of what has been said is, in general, that the wealth and power of all nations depending so much on their trade and commerce, and every nation being, like the three I have mentioned, in such different circumstances of advantage or disadvantage in the pursuit of this common interest, a good government, and therefore the government of a Patriot King, will be directed constantly to make the most of every advantage that nature has given or art can procure towards the

improvement of trade and commerce. And this is one of the principal criterions by which we are to judge whether governors are in the true interest of the people or not.

It results, in particular, that Great Britain might improve her wealth and power in a proportion superior to that of any nation who can be deemed her rival, if the advantages she has were as wisely cultivated as they will be in the reign of a Patriot King. To be convinced more thoroughly of this truth, a very short process of reasoning will suffice. Let any man, who has knowledge enough for it, first compare the natural state of Great Britain and of the United Provinces, and then their artificial state together; that is, let him consider minutely the advantages we have by the situation, extent, and nature of our island, over the inhabitants of a few salt marshes gained on the sea, and hardly defended from it; and after that, let him consider how nearly these provinces have raised themselves to an equality of wealth and power with the kingdom of Great Britain. From whence arises this difference of improvement? It arises plainly from hence: the Dutch have been from the foundation of their commonwealth a nation of patriots and merchants. The spirit of that people has not been diverted from these two objects,—the defence of their liberty, and the improvement of their trade and commerce; which have been carried on by them with uninterrupted and unslackened application, industry, order, and economy. In Great Britain the case has not been the same in either respect; but here we confine ourselves to speak of the last alone.

Trade and commerce, such as they were in those days, had been sometimes and in some instances, before the reign of Queen Elizabeth, encouraged and improved; but the great encouragements were given, the great extensions and improvements were made, by that glorious princess. To her we owe that spirit of domestic and foreign trade which is not quite extinguished. It was she who gave that rapid motion to our whole mercantile system which is not entirely ceased. They both flagged under her successor; were not revived under his son; were checked, diverted, clogged, and interrupted, during our civil wars; and began to exert new vigour after the restoration in a long course of peace, but met with new difficulties, too, from the confirmed rivalry of the Dutch, and the growing rivalry of the French. To one of these the pusillanimous character of James I. gave many scandalous occasions; and the other was favoured by the conduct of Charles II., who never was in the true interest of the people he governed. From the revolution to the death of Queen Anne, however trade and commerce might be aided and encouraged in other respects, they were necessarily subjected to depredations abroad, and overloaded by taxes at home, during the course of two great wars. From the accession of the late king to this hour, in the midst of a full peace, the debts of the nation continue much the same, the taxes have been increased, and

for eighteen years of this time we have tamely suffered continual depredations from the most contemptible maritime power in Europe, that of Spain.

A Patriot King will neither neglect nor sacrifice his country's interest. No other interest, neither a foreign nor a domestic, neither a public nor a private, will influence his conduct in government. He will not multiply taxes wantonly, nor keep up those unnecessarily which necessity has laid, that he may keep up legions of tax-gatherers. He will not continue national debts by all sorts of political and other profusion; nor, more wickedly still, by a settled purpose of oppressing and impoverishing the people, that he may with greater ease corrupt some and govern the whole according to the dictates of his passions and arbitrary will. To give ease and encouragement to manufactory at home, to assist and protect trade abroad, to improve and keep in heart the national colonies, like so many farms of the mother country, will be principal and constant parts of the attention of such a prince. The wealth of the nation he will most justly esteem to be his wealth, the power his power, the security and the honour his security and honour; and by the very means by which he promotes the two first, he will wisely preserve the two last; for by these means, and by these alone, can the great advantage of the situation of this kingdom be taken and improved.

Great Britain is an island; and, whilst nations on the continent are at immense charge in maintaining their barriers, and perpetually on their guard, and frequently embroiled to extend or strengthen them, Great Britain may, if her governors please, accumulate wealth in maintaining hers, make herself secure from invasions, and be ready to invade others when her own immediate interest, or the general interest of Europe, requires it. Of all which Queen Elizabeth's reign is a memorable example and undeniable proof. I said the general interest of Europe; because it seems to me that this alone, should call our councils off from an almost entire application to their domestic and proper business. Other nations must watch over every motion of their neighbours; penetrate, if they can, every design; foresee every minute event and take part by some engagement or other in almost every conjuncture that arises. But as we cannot be easily nor suddenly attacked, and as we ought not to aim at any acquisition of territory on the continent, it may be our interest to watch the secret workings of the several councils abroad; to advise and warn, to abet and oppose; but it never can be our true interest easily and officiously to enter into action, much less into engagements that imply action and expense. Other nations, like the Velites or light-armed troops, stand foremost in the field, and skirmish perpetually. When a great war begins, we ought to look on the powers of the continent to whom we incline, like the two first lines, the Principes and Hastati, of a Roman army: and on ourselves, like the Triarii, that are not to charge with these legions

on every occasion, but to be ready for the conflict whenever the fortune of the day, be it sooner or later, calls us to it, and the sum of things, or the general interest, makes it necessary.

This is that post of advantage and honour, which our singular situation among the powers of Europe determines us, or should determine us, to take, in all disputes that happen on the continent. If we neglect it, and dissipate our strength on occasions that touch us remotely or indirectly, we are governed by men who do not know the true interest of this island, or who have some other interest more at heart. If we adhere to it, so at least as to deviate little and seldom from it, as we shall do whenever we are wisely and honestly governed, then will this nation make her proper figure; and a great one it will be. By a continual attention to improve her natural, that is her maritime, strength, by collecting all her forces within herself, and reserving them to be laid out on great occasions, such as regard her immediate interests and her honour, or such as are truly important to the general system of power in Europe; she may be the arbitrator of differences, the guardian of liberty, and the preserver of that balance, which has been so much talked of, and is so little understood.

'Are we never to be soldiers?' it will be said. Yes, constantly, in such proportion as is necessary for the defence of good government. To establish such a military force as none but bad governors can want is to establish tyrannical power in the king or in the ministers; and may be wanted by the latter, when the former would be secure without his army, if he broke his minister. Occasionally too we must be soldiers, and for offence as well as defence; but in proportion to the nature of the conjuncture, considered always relatively to the difference here insisted upon between our situation, our interest, and the nature of our strength, compared with those of the other powers of Europe; and not in proportion to the desires, or even to the wants, of the nations with whom we are confederated. Like other amphibious animals, we must come occasionally on shore; but the water is more properly our element, and in it, like them, as we find our greatest security, so we exert our greatest force.

What I touch upon here very shortly, deserves to be considered, and reconsidered, by every man who has, or may have, any share in the government of Great Britain: For we have not only departed too much from our true national interest in this respect, but we have done so with the general applause even of well-meaning men, who did not discern that we wasted ourselves by an improper application of our strength in conjunctures when we might have served the common cause far more usefully, nay with entire effect, by a proper application of our natural strength. There was something more than this. Armies grew so much into fashion, in time of war, among men who meant well to their country, that they who mean ill to it have kept, and keep

them still up in the profoundest peace; and the number of our soldiers, in this island alone, is almost double to that of our seamen. That they are kept up against foreign enemies, cannot be said with any colour. If they are kept for show, they are ridiculous; if they are kept for any other purpose whatever, they are too dangerous to be suffered. A Patriot King, seconded by ministers attached to the true interest of their country, would soon reform this abuse, and save a great part of this expense; or apply it in a manner preferable even to the saving it, to the maintenance of a body of marine foot, and to the charge of a register of 30,000 or 40,000 seamen. But no thoughts like these, no great designs for the honour and interest of the kingdom, will be entertained, till men who have this honour and interest at heart arise to power.

I come now to the last head under which I shall consider the character and conduct of a Patriot King; and let it not be thought to be of the least importance, though it may seem, at the first mention, to concern appearances rather than realities, and to be nothing more than a circumstance contained in or implied by the great parts of the character and conduct of such a king. It is of his personal behaviour, of his manner of living with other men, and, in a word, of his private as well as public life that I mean to speak. It is of that decency and grace, that ~~bien-saine~~^{propriety} of the French, that decorum of the Latins, that *περιττον* of the Greeks, which can never be reflected on any character that is not laid in virtue; but for want of which, a character that is so laid will lose, at all times, part of the lustre belonging to it, and may be sometimes not a little misunderstood and undervalued. Beauty is not separable from health, nor this lustre, said the Stoicks, from virtue; but as a man may be healthful without being handsome, so he may be virtuous without being amiable.

There are certain finishing strokes, a last hand as we commonly say, to be given to all the works of art. When that is not given, we may see the excellency of a general design, and the beauty of some particular parts. A judge of the art may see further; he may allow for what is wanting, and discern the full merit of a complete work in one that is imperfect. But vulgar eyes will not be so struck. The work will appear to them defective, because unfinished; so that, without knowing precisely what they dislike, they may admire, but they will not be pleased. Thus in moral characters, though every part be virtuous and great, or though the few and small defects in it be concealed under the blaze of those shining qualities that compensate for them; yet is not this enough even in private life; it is less so in public life, and still less so in that of a prince.

There is a certain species liberalis, more easily understood than explained, and felt than defined, that must be acquired and rendered habitual to him. A certain propriety of words and actions, that

results from their conformity to nature and character, must always accompany him, and create an air and manner that run uniformly through the whole tenor of his conduct and behaviour; which air and manner are so far from any kind or degree of affectation, that they cannot be attained except by him who is void of all affectation. We may illustrate this to ourselves, and make it more sensible, by reflecting on the conduct of good dramatic or epic writers. They draw the characters which they bring on the scene from nature, they sustain them through the whole piece, and make their actors neither say nor do anything that is not exactly proper to the character each of them represents. ‘Oderint dum metuant,’ came properly out of the mouth of a tyrant; but Euripides would never have put that execrable sentence into the mouth of Minos or Æacus.

A man of sense and virtue both will not fall into any great impropriety of character or indecency of conduct; but he may slide or be surprised into small ones, from a thousand reasons, and in a thousand manners, which I shall not stay to enumerate. Against these, therefore, even men who are incapable of falling into the others must be still on their guard, and no men so much as princes. When their minds are filled and their hearts warmed with true notions of government, when they know their duty, and love their people, they will not fail in the great parts they are to act, in the council, in the field, and in all the arduous affairs that belong to their kingly office; at least they will not begin to fail, by failing in them. But as they are men, susceptible of the same impressions, liable to the same errors, and exposed to the same passions, so they are likewise exposed to more and stronger temptations than others. Besides, the elevation in which they are placed, as it gives them great advantages, gives them great disadvantages too, that often countervail the former. Thus, for instance, a little merit in a prince is seen and felt by numbers; it is multiplied, as it were, and in proportion to this effect his reputation is raised by it. But then, a little failing is seen and felt by numbers too; it is multiplied in the same manner, and his reputation will sink in the same proportion.

I spoke above of defects that may be concealed under the blaze of great and shining qualities. This may be the case; it has been that of some princes. There goes a tradition that Henry IV. of France asked a Spanish ambassador, what mistresses the King of Spain had? The ambassador replied, like a formal pedant, that his master was a prince who feared God, and had no mistress but the queen. Henry IV. felt the reflection, and asked him in return, with some contempt, ‘Whether his master had not virtues enough to cover one vice?’

The faults or defects, that may be thus covered or compensated, are, I think, those of the man, rather than those of the king; such as arise from constitution, and the natural rather than the moral character;

such as may be deemed accidental starts of passion, or accidental remissness in some unguarded hours; surprises, if I may say so, of the man on the king. When these happen seldom, and pass soon, they may be hid like spots in the sun; but they are spots still. He who has the means of seeing them, will see them; and he who has not, may feel the effects of them without knowing precisely the cause. When they continue (for here is the danger, because if they continue they will increase) they are spots no longer: they spread a general shade, and obscure the light in which they were drowned before. The virtues of the king are lost in the vices of the man.

Alexander had violent passions, and those for wine and women were predominant, after his ambition. They were spots in his character before they prevailed by the force of habit; as soon as they began to do so, the king and the hero appeared less, the rake and bully more. Persepolis was burnt at the instigation of Thais, and Clytus was killed in a drunken brawl. He repented indeed of these two horrible actions, and was again the king and hero upon many occasions; but he had not been enough on his guard, when the strongest incitements to vanity and to sensual pleasures offered themselves at every moment to him; and, when he stood in all his easy hours surrounded by women and eunuchs, by the panders, parasites, and buffoons of a voluptuous court, they who could not approach the king, approached the man, and by seducing the man, they betrayed the king. His faults became habits. The Macedonians, who did not or would not see the one, saw the other; and he fell a sacrifice to their resentments, to their fears, and to those factions that will arise under an odious government, as well as under one that grows into contempt.

Other characters might be brought to contrast with this; the first Scipio Africanus, for example, or the eldest Cato; and there will be no objection to a comparison of such citizens of Rome as these were, with kings of the first magnitude. Now, the reputation of the first Scipio was not so clear and uncontrovected in private as in public life; nor was he allowed by all to be a man of such severe virtue as he affected, and as that age required. Nævius was thought to mean him in some verses Gellius has preserved; and Valerius Antias made no scruple to assert that, far from restoring the fair Spaniard to her family, he debauched and kept her. Notwithstanding this, what authority did he not maintain? In what esteem and veneration did he not live and die? With what panegyrics has not the whole torrent of writers rolled down his reputation even to these days? This could not have happened, if the vice imputed to him had shown itself in any scandalous appearances, to eclipse the lustre of the general, the consul, or the citizen. The same reflection might be extended to Cato, who loved wine as well as Scipio loved women. Men did not judge in the days of the elder Cato perhaps, as Seneca was ready to do in those of the younger, that

drunkenness could be no crime if Cato drank; but Cato's passion as well as that of Scipio, was subdued and kept under by his public character. His virtue warmed, instead of cooling, by this indulgence to his genius or natural temper; and one may gather, from what Tully puts into his mouth, in the treatise concerning old age, that even his love of wine was rendered subservient, instead of doing hurt, to the measures he pursued in his public character.

Decency, grace, propriety of manners to character, are so essential to princes in particular, that whenever it is neglected, their virtues lose a great degree of lustre, and their defects acquire much aggravation. Nay more; by neglecting decency and grace, and a sufficient regard to appearances, even their virtues may betray them into failings, their failings into vices, and their vices into habits unworthy of princes and unworthy of men.

The constitutions of governments, and the different tempers and characters of people, may be thought justly to deserve some consideration, in determining the behaviour of princes in private life as well as in public; and to put a difference, for instance, between the decorum of a king of France and that of a king of Great Britain.

Lewis XIV. was king in an absolute monarchy, and reigned over a people whose genius makes it as fit perhaps to impose on them by admiration and awe, as to gain and hold them by affection. Accordingly he kept great state, was haughty, was reserved; and all he said or did appeared to be forethought or planned. His regard to appearances was such, that when his mistress was the wife of another man, and he had children by her every year, he endeavoured to cover her constant residence at court by a place she filled about the queen; and he dined and supped and cohabited with the latter in every apparent respect as if he had no mistress at all. Thus he raised a great reputation; he was revered by his subjects, and admired by his neighbours; and this was due principally to the art with which he managed appearances, so as to set off his virtues, to disguise his failings and his vices, and by his example and authority to keep a veil drawn over the futility and debauch of his court.

His successor, not to the throne, but to the sovereign power, was a mere rake, with some wit and no morals; nay, with so little regard to them, that he made them a subject of ridicule in discourse, and appeared in his whole conduct more profligate, if that could be, than he was in principle. The difference between these characters soon appeared in abominable effects: such as, cruelty apart, might recall the memory of Nero, or, in the other sex, that of Messalina, and such as I leave the chroniclers of scandal to relate.

Our Elizabeth was queen in a limited monarchy, and reigned over a people at all times more easily led than driven, and at that time capable of being attached to their prince and their country by a

more generous principle than any of those which prevail in our days, by affection. There was a strong prerogative then in being, and the crown was in possession of greater legal power. Popularity was, however, then, as it is now, and as it must be always in mixed government, the sole true foundation of that sufficient authority and influence, which other constitutions give the prince gratis, and independently of the people, but which a king of this nation must acquire. The wise queen saw it, and she saw too how much popularity depends on those appearances, that depend on the decorum, the decency, the grace, and the propriety of behaviour of which we are speaking. A warm concern for the interest and honour of the nation, a tenderness for her people, and a confidence in their affections, were appearances that ran through her whole public conduct, and gave life and colour to it. She did great things, and she knew how to set them off according to their full value, by her manner of doing them. In her private behaviour she showed great affability; she descended even to familiarity; but her familiarity was such as could be not imputed to her weakness, and was, therefore, most justly ascribed to her goodness. Though a woman, she hid all that was womanish about her; and if a few equivocal marks of coquetry appeared on some occasions, they passed like flashes of lightning, vanished as soon as they were discerned, and imprinted no blot on her character. She had private friendships, she had favourites; but she never suffered her friends to forget she was their queen; and when her favourites did, she made them feel that she was so.

Her successor had no virtues to set off, but he had failings and vices to conceal. He could not conceal the latter; and, void of the former, he could not compensate for them. His failings and his vices therefore standing in full view, he passed for a weak prince and an ill man, and fell into all the contempt wherein his memory remains to this day. The methods he took to preserve himself from it served but to confirm him in it. No man can keep the decorum of manners in life, who is not free from every kind of affectation, as it has been said already; but he who affects what he has no pretensions to, or what is improper to his character and rank in the world, is guilty of most consummate folly; he becomes ungracious, doubly indecent, and quite ridiculous. James I., not having one quality to conciliate the esteem or affection of his people to him, endeavoured to impose on their understandings, and to create a respect for himself, by spreading the most extravagant notions about kings in general, as if they were middle beings between God and other men; and by comparing the extent and unsearchable mysteries of their power and prerogative to those of the Divine providence. His language and his behaviour were commonly suited to such foolish pretensions; and thus, by assuming a claim to such respect and submission as were not due to him, he lost a great part of what was due to him. In short, he began at the wrong end; for though the shining qualities of the king

may cover some failings and some vices that do not grow up to strong habits in the man, yet must the character of a great and good king be founded in that of a great and good man. A king who lives out of the sight of his subjects, or is never seen by them except on his throne, can scarce be despised as a man, though he may be hated as a king. But the king who lives more in their sight, and more under their observation, may be despised before he is hated, and even without being hated. This happened to King James: a thousand circumstances brought it to pass, and none more than the indecent weaknesses he had for his minions. He did not endeavour to cure this contempt and raise his character only by affecting what he had no pretensions to, as in the former case; but he endeavoured likewise most vainly to do it by affecting what was proper to his character and rank. He did not endeavour indeed to disguise his natural pusillanimity and timidity under the mask of a bully, whilst he was imposed upon and insulted by all his neighbours, and above all by the Spaniards; but he retailed the scraps of Buchanan, affected to talk much, figured in Church controversies, and put on all the pedantic appearances of a scholar, whilst he neglected those of a great and good man, as well as king.

Let not princes flatter themselves. They will be examined closely, in private as well as in public life; and those who cannot pierce further will judge of them by the appearances they give in both. To obtain true popularity, that which is founded in esteem and affection, they must therefore maintain their characters in both, and to that end neglect appearances in neither, but observe the decorum necessary, to preserve the esteem, whilst they win the affections of mankind. Kings, they must never forget that they are men; men, they must never forget that they are kings. The sentiments which one of these reflections of course inspires, will give a humane and affable air to their whole behaviour, and make them taste in that high elevation all the joys of social life. The sentiments that the other reflection suggests, will be found very compatible with the former; and they may never forget that they are kings, though they do not always carry the crown on their heads, nor the sceptre in their hands. Vanity and folly must entrench themselves in a constant affection of state, to preserve regal dignity; a wise prince will know how to preserve it when he lays his majesty aside. He will dare to appear a private man, and in that character he will draw to himself a respect less ostentatious, but more real and more pleasing to him than any which is paid to the monarch. By never saying what is unfit for him to say, he will never hear what is unfit for him to hear. By never doing what is unfit for him to do, he will never see what is unfit for him to see. Decency and propriety of manners are so far from lessening the pleasures of life, that they refine them, and give them a higher taste; they are so far from restraining the free and easy commerce of social life, that they banish the bane of it,

licentiousness of behaviour. Ceremony is the barrier against this abuse of liberty in public; politeness and decency are so in private; and the prince who practises and exacts them, will amuse himself much better, and oblige those who have the honour to be in his intimacy and to share his pleasures with him much more, than he could possibly do by the most absolute and unguarded familiarity.

That which is here recommended to princes, that constant guard on their own behaviour even in private life, and that constant decorum which their example ought to exact from others, will not be found so difficult in practice as may be imagined; if they use a proper discernment in the choice of the persons whom they admit to the nearest degrees of intimacy with them. A prince should choose his companions with as great care as his ministers. If he trusts the business of his state to these, he trusts his character to those; and his character will depend on theirs much more than is commonly thought. General experience will lead men to judge that a similitude of character determined the choice; even when chance, indulgence to assiduity, good-nature, or want of reflection, had their share in the introduction of men unworthy of such favour. But, in such cases, certain it is that they who judged wrong at first concerning him, will judge right at last. He is not a trifler, for instance. Be it so; but if he takes trifling futile creatures, men of mean character, or of no character, into his intimacy, he shows a disposition to become such; and will become such, unless he breaks these habits early, and before puerile amusements are grown up to be the business of his life. I mean, that the minds of princes, like the minds of other men, will be brought down insensibly to the tone of the company they keep.

A worse consequence even than this, may follow a want of discernment in princes how to choose their companions, and how to conduct themselves in private life. Silly kings have resigned themselves to their ministers, have suffered these to stand between them and their people, and have formed no judgments, nor taken any measures on their own knowledge, but all implicitly on the representations made to them by their ministers. Kings of superior capacity have resigned themselves in the same manner to their favourites, male and female, have suffered these to stand between them and their most able and faithful counsellors; their judgments have been influenced, and their measures directed by insinuations of women, or of men as little fitted as women, by nature and education, to be hearkened to, in the great affairs of government. History is full of such examples; all melancholy, many tragical! sufficient, one would imagine, to deter princes, if attended to, from permitting the companions of their idle hours, or the instruments of their pleasures, to exceed the bounds of those provinces. Should a minister of state pretend to vie with any of these, about the forms of a drawing-room, the regulation of a ruelle,

the decoration of a ball, or the dress of a fine lady, he would be thought ridiculous, and he would be truly so. But then are not any of these impertinent, when they presume to meddle in things at least as much above them, as those that have been mentioned are below the others? And are not princes, who suffer them to do so, unaccountably weak?

What shall I say further on this head? Nothing more is necessary. Let me wind it up, therefore, by asserting this great truth, that results from what has been already said; as he can never fill the character of a Patriot King, though his personal great and good qualities be in every other respect equal to it, who lies open to the flattery of courtiers, to the seduction of women, and to the partialities and affections which are easily contracted by too great indulgence in private life; so the prince, who is desirous to establish this character, must observe such a decorum, and keep such a guard on himself, as may prevent even the suspicion of being liable to such influences. For as the reality would ruin, the very suspicion will lessen him in the opinion of mankind; and the opinion of mankind, which is fame after death, is superior strength and power in life.

And now, if the principles and measures of conduct, laid down in this discourse, as necessary to constitute that greatest and most glorious of human beings, a Patriot King, be sufficient to this purpose; let us consider, too, how easy it is, or ought to be, to establish them in the minds of princes. They are founded on true propositions, all of which are obvious, nay, many of them self-evident. They are confirmed by universal experience. In a word, no understanding can resist them, and none but the weakest can fail, or be misled, in the application of them. To a prince whose heart is corrupt, it is in vain to speak; and, for such a prince, I would not be thought to write. But if the heart of a prince be not corrupt, these truths will find an easy ingressation, through the understanding, to it. Let us consider again, what the sure, the necessary effects of such principles and measures of conduct must be, to the prince, and to the people. On this subject let the imagination range through the whole glorious scene of a patriot reign; the beauty of the idea will inspire those transports, which Plato imagined the vision of virtue would inspire, if virtue could be seen. What in truth can be so lovely, what so venerable, as to contemplate a king on whom the eyes of a whole people are fixed, filled with admiration, and glowing with affection? a king, in the temper of whose government, like that of Nerva, things so seldom allied as empire and liberty are intimately mixed, co-exist together inseparably, and constitute one real essence? What spectacle can be presented to the view of the mind so rare, so nearly divine, as a king possessed of absolute power, neither usurped by fraud, nor maintained by force, but the genuine effect of esteem, of confidence, and affection;

the free gift of liberty, who finds her greatest security in this power, and would desire no other if the prince on the throne could be, what his people wish him to be, immortal ? Of such a prince, and of such a prince alone, it may be said with strict propriety and truth,—

‘Volentes

Per populos dat jura, viamque affectat Olympo.’

Civil fury will have no place in this draught ; or, if the monster is seen, he must be seen as Virgil describes him,—

‘Centum vinctus ahenis

Post tergum nodis, fremit horridus ore cruento.’

He must be seen subdued, bound, chained, and deprived entirely of power to do hurt. In his place, concord will appear, brooding peace and prosperity on the happy land ; joy sitting in every face, content in every heart ; a people unoppressed, undisturbed, unalarmed ; busy to improve their private property and the public stock ; fleets covering the ocean, bringing home wealth by the returns of industry, carrying assistance or terror abroad by the direction of wisdom, and asserting triumphantly the right and the honour of Great Britain, as far as waters roll and as winds can waft them.

Those who live to see such happy days, and to act in so glorious a scene, will perhaps call to mind, with some tenderness of sentiment, when he is no more, a man who contributed his mite to carry on so good a work, and who desired life for nothing so much, as to see a king of Great Britain the most popular man in his country, and a Patriot King at the head of a united people.

THE STATE OF PARTIES AT THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE I.

I PERCEIVE by yours that my discourse of the character and conduct of a patriot king, in that article which relates to party, has not entirely satisfied your expectations. You expected, from some things that I remember to have said to you in conversation, and others that have fallen on that occasion from my pen, a more particular application of those general reasonings to the present time, and to the state of parties, from the late king's accession to the throne. The subject is delicate enough, and yet I shall speak upon it what truth exacts from me, with the utmost frankness : for I know all our parties too well to

esteem any; and I am now too old, and too resigned to my fate, to want or to fear any.

Whatever anecdotes you have been told, for you are too young to have seen the passages of the times I am going to mention, and whatever prepossessions you have had, take these facts for undoubted truths: that there was no design on foot, during the four last years of Queen Anne's reign, to set aside the succession of the house of Hanover, and to place the crown on the head of the pretender to it; nor any party formed for this purpose at the time of the death of that princess, whose memory I honour, and therefore feel a just indignation at the irreverence with which we have seen it treated. If such a design had been on foot, during that time, there were moments when the execution of it would not have been difficult or dangerous enough to have stopped men of the most moderate resolution. Neither could a design of that nature have been carried on so long, though it was not carried into execution, without leaving some traces, which would have appeared when such strict inquisitions were made; when the papers of so many of the queen's servants were seized, and even her own papers, even those she had sealed up to be burnt after her death, were exposed to so much indecent inspection. But, laying aside all arguments of the probable kind, I deny the fact absolutely; and I have the better title to expect credit, because it could not be true without my knowledge, or at least suspicion of it; and because even they who believed it, for all who asserted it did not believe it, had no proof to produce, nor have to this hour, but vain surmises; nor any authority to rest upon, but the clamour of party.

That there were particular men, who corresponded indirectly, and directly too, with the Pretender, and with others for his service; that these men professed themselves to be zealous in it, and made large promises, and raised some faint hopes, I cannot doubt; though this was unknown to me at that time, or at least I knew it not with the same certainty, and in the same detail, that I have known it since. But if this was done by some who were in the service of Queen Anne, it was done too by some who were out of it, and, I think, with little sincerity by either.

It may well seem strange to one who carries in his breast a heart like yours, that men of any rank, and especially of the highest, should hold a conduct so false, so dangerous, always of uncertain event, and often, as it was in the case here mentioned, upon remote contingencies, and such as they themselves think the least probable. Even I think it strange, who have much longer mingled in a corrupt world, and who have seen many more examples of the folly, of the cunning, and the perfidy of mankind. A great regard to wealth and a total contempt of virtue are sentiments very nearly allied; and they must possess the whole souls of men whom they can determine to such infamous

duplicity, to such double treachery. In fact they do so. One is so afraid of losing his fortune that he lays in claims to secure it, perhaps to augment it, on all sides, and to prevent even imaginary dangers. Another values so little the inward testimony of a good conscience, or the future reproaches of those he has deceived, that he scruples not to take engagements, for a time to come, that he has no design to keep; if they may serve as expedients to facilitate, in any small degree, the success of an immediate project. All this was done at the time, on the occasion, and by the persons I intend. But the scheme of defeating the protestant succession was so far from being laid by the queen and her ministers, and such a resolution was so far from being taken, that the very men I speak of, when they were pressed by the other side, that is from Versailles and from St. Germains, to be more particular, and to come into a closer concert, declined both, and gave the most evasive answers.

A little before or about the time of the queen's death, some other persons, who figured afterwards in the rebellion, entered in good earnest into those engagements, as I believe; for I do not know exactly the date of them. But whenever they took them, they took them as single men. They could answer for no party to back them. They might flatter themselves with hopes and dreams, like Pompey, if little men and little things may be compared with great, of legions ready to rise at the stamp of their feet. But they had no assurance, no, nor grounds to expect any troops, except those of the Highlands, whose disposition in general was known to every man, but whose insurrection, without the concurrence of other insurrections and other troops, was deemed, even by those that made them take arms afterwards, not a strength but a weakness, ruin to the poor people, and ruin to the cause. In a word, these men were so truly single in their engagements, and their measures were so unripe for action when the resolution of acting immediately was taken by them, that I am persuaded they durst not communicate their design to any one man of consequence that served at that time with them. What persuades me of it is this. One man, whom they thought likely to incline to them on several accounts, they attempted indirectly and at a great distance; they came no nearer to the point with him, neither then, that is just before the queen's death, nor afterwards. They had indeed no encouragement to do it; for, upon this hint and another circumstance which fell in, both he and others took several occasions to declare, that though they would serve the queen faithfully, and exclusively of all other regards or engagements, to her last breath, yet after her decease they would acknowledge the prince on whom the succession devolved by law, and to which they had sworn, and no other. This declaration would have been that of the far greatest number of the same party, and would have been stuck to by them if the passions and private

interests of another party had not prevailed over the true interest of a new family that was going to mount the throne. You may ask me now, and the question will not be at all improper, How it came to pass if the queen and her ministers had no design to defeat the succession that so much suspicion of it prevailed, that so great an alarm was taken, and so great a clamour raised? I might answer you very shortly and truly, By the strange conduct of a first minister, the contests about the negotiations of the peace, and the arts of a party.

The minds of some ministers are like the sanctum sanctorum of a temple I have read of somewhere: before it a great curtain was solemnly drawn; within it nothing was to be seen but a confused group of misshapen and imperfect forms, heads without bodies, bodies without heads, and the like. To develop the most complicated cases, and to decide in the most doubtful, has been the talent of great ministers; it is that of others to perplex the most simple, and to be puzzled by the plainest. No man was more desirous of power than the minister here intended, and he had a competent share of cunning to wriggle himself into it; but then his part was over, and no man was more at a loss how to employ it. The ends he proposed to himself he saw for the most part darkly and indistinctly; and if he saw them a little better, he still made use of means disproportionate to them. That private correspondence with the queen, which produced the change of the ministry in 1710, was begun with him whilst he was secretary of state, and was continued through him during the two years that intervened between his leaving the court and his return to it. This gave him the sole confidence of the queen, put him more absolutely at the head of the party that came into power, and invested him with all the authority that a first minister could have in those days; and before any man could presume to rival in that rank and in this kingdom, the rank of the ancient mayors of the palace in France. The tories, with whom and by whom he had risen, expected much from him. Their expectations were ill answered; and I think that such management as he employed would not have hindered them long from breaking from him, if new things had not fallen in to engage their whole attention, and to divert their passions.

The foolish prosecution of Sacheverel had carried party-rage to the height, and the late change of the ministry had confirmed it there. These circumstances, and many others relative to them, which I omit, would have made it impossible, if there had been honesty and wisdom enough to desire it, to bring about a coalition of the bulk of the tories and whigs at the latter end of this reign; as it had been brought about a few years before under the administration of my lord Marlborough and my lord Godolphin, who broke it soon, and before it had time to cement, by making such a use of it as I am unable to account for, even at this hour. The two parties were in truth become factions, in

the strict sense of the word. I was of one, and I own the guilt; which no man of the other would have a good grace to deny. In this respect they were alike; but here was the difference: one was well united, well conducted, and determined to their future as well as their present objects. Not one of these advantages attended the other. The minister had evidently no bottom to rest his administration upon, but that of the party at the head of which he came into power; if he had rested it there, if he had gained their confidence, instead of creating, even wantonly, if I may say so, a distrust of himself in them, it is certain he might have determined them to every national interest during the queen's time, and after her death. But this was above his conception as well as his talents. He meant to keep power as long as he could by the little arts by which he had got into it; he thought that he should be able to compound for himself in all events, and cared little what became of his party, his mistress, or the nation. That this was the whole of his scheme appeared sufficiently in the course of his administration; was then seen by some; and has been since acknowledged by all people. For this purpose he coaxed and persecuted whigs; he flattered and disappointed tories; and supported, by a thousand little tricks, his tottering administration. To the tory party he held out the peace, as an era when all they expected should be done for them, and when they should be placed in such fulness of power and such strength of party, 'that it would be more the interest of the successor to be well "with them, than theirs to be well with him.' Such expressions were often used, and others of like import; and, I believe, these oracular speeches were interpreted, as oracles used to be, according as every man's inclinations led him.

The contests that soon followed, by the violent opposition to the negotiations of peace, did the good hinted at above to the minister, and enabled him to amuse and banter his party a little longer. But they did great, and in some respects irreparable, mischief to Great Britain and to all Europe. One part of the mischief they did at home is proper to be mentioned here. They dipped the house of Hanover in our party-quarrels unseasonably, I presume to think, and unpopularly; for though the contest was maintained by two parties that pretended equally to have the national interest at heart, yet the national interest was so plainly on one side of the question, and the other side was so plainly partial, at the expense of this interest, to the emperor, the princes of the empire, and our other allies, that a successor to the crown, who was himself a prince of Germany, should have preserved in good policy for this very reason the appearance at least of some neutrality. The means employed openly to break the queen's measures were indecent and unjustifiable; those employed secretly, and meditated to be employed, were worse. The ministers of Hanover, whose conduct I may censure the more freely because the late king

did not approve it all, took so remarkable a share in the first, that they might be, and they were, suspected of having some in the others. This had a very bad effect, which was improved by men in the two extremes. The whigs desired nothing more than to have it thought that the successor was theirs, if I may repeat an insolent expression which was used at that time; the notion did them honour; and though it could give no colour, it gave some strength to their opposition. The Jacobites insinuated industriously the same thing; and represented that the establishment of the house of Hanover would be the establishment of the whig party, and that the interests of Great Britain would be constantly sacrificed to foreign interests, and her wealth drained to support them under that family. I leave you to judge what ingression such exaggerations must find on such occasion and in such a ferment. I do not think they determined men to Jacobitism. I know they did not; but I know that they disinclined men from the succession, and made many, who resolved to submit to it, submit to it rather as a necessary evil than as an eligible good.

This was, to the best of my observation and knowledge, the state of one party. An absurd one it was, and the consequences of it were foreseen, foretold, and pressed upon the minister at the time, but always without effect, and sometimes without any answers. He had some private intrigue for himself at Hanover; so he had at Bar. He was the bubble of one in the end; the Pretender was so of the other. But his whole management in the meantime was contrived to keep up a kind of general indetermination in the party about the succession; which made a man of great temper once say to him with passion, that 'he believed no other minister, at the head of a powerful party, would not be better at Hanover, if he did not mean to be worse there.'

The state of the party was this. The whigs had appeared zealous for the protestant succession from the time when King William proposed it, after the death of the Duke of Gloucester. The tories voted for it then; and the acts that were judged necessary to secure it, some of them at least, were promoted by them. Yet were they not thought nor did they affect, as the others did, to be thought extremely fond of it. King William did not come into this measure, till he found, upon trial, that there was no other safe and practicable; and the tories had an air of coming into it for no other reason. Besides which, it is certain that there was at that time a much greater leaven of Jacobitism in the tory lump, than at the time spoken of here.

Now, thus far the whigs acted like a national party, who thought that their religion and liberty could be secured by no other expedient, and therefore adhered to this settlement of the crown with distinguished zeal. But this national party degenerated soon into faction; that is, the national interest became soon a secondary and subservient motive, and the cause of the succession was supported more for the sake of the

party or faction, than for the sake of the nation; and with views that went more directly to the establishment of their own administration, than to a solid settlement of the present royal family. This appeared, evidently enough, to those whom noise and show could not impose upon, in the latter end of the queen's reign, and plain beyond dispute to all mankind, after her decease. The art of the whigs was to blend, as undistinguishably as they could, all their party-interests with those of the succession: and they made just the same factious use of the supposed danger of it, as the tories had endeavoured to make, some time before, of the supposed danger of the church. As no man is reputed a friend to Christianity beyond the Alps and the Pyrenees, who does not acknowledge the papal supremacy, so here no man was to be reputed a friend to the protestant succession, who was not ready to acknowledge their supremacy. The interest of the present royal family was, to succeed without opposition and risk, and to come to the throne in a calm. It was the interest of a faction that they should come to it in a storm. Accordingly the whigs were very near putting in execution some of the wildest projects of insurrections and rebellion under pretence of securing what there was not sufficient disposition, nor any preparation at all made to obstruct. Happily for the public these designs proved abortive. They were too well known to have succeeded; but they might have had, and they would have had, most fatal consequences. The storm, that was not raised to disturb or endanger the late king's accession, was only deferred. To a party, who meant nothing less than engrossing the whole power of the government and the whole wealth of the nation under the successor, a storm, in which every other man should be driven from him, was too necessary, not to be conjured up at any rate; and it was so immediately after the late king's accession. He came to the throne easily and quietly, and took possession of the kingdom with as little trouble as he could have expected if he had been, not only the queen's successor, but her son. The whole nation submitted cheerfully to his government, and the queen's servants discharged the duty of their offices, whilst he continued them in their offices, in such a manner as to merit his approbation. This was signified to some of them, to the secretaries in particular, in the strongest terms, and according to his majesty's express order, before the whole council of state. He might I think, I thought then that he ought, and every man, except the Earl of Oxford, who believed, or had a mind to make others believe, that his influence would be great in the new reign, expected, that he would have given his principal confidence and the principal power of the administration to the whigs; but it was scarce possible to expect, that he would immediately let loose the whole fury of party, suffer the queen's servants, who had surely been guilty of no crime against him, nor the state, to be so bitterly persecuted; and proscribe in effect every man in the country who

did not bear the name of whig. Princes have often forgot, on their accession to a throne, even personal injuries received in party quarrels, and the saying of Lewis XII. of France, in answer to those who would have persuaded him to show severity to La Tremouille, is very deservedly famous. ‘God forbid,’ said he, ‘that Lewis XII. should revenge ‘the quarrels of the Duke of Orleans.’ Other princes, who have fought their way to the throne, have not only exercised clemency, but shown favour to those who had stood in arms against them; and here again I might quote the example of another king of France, that of Henry IV. But to take an example in our own country, look back to the restoration, consider all that passed from the year 1641 to the year 1660, and then compare the measures that King Charles II. was advised to pursue for the establishment of his government, in the circumstances of that time, with those which the late king was advised, and prevailed on, against his opinion, inclination, and first resolution, to pursue, in the circumstances I have just mentioned. I leave the conclusion to the candour and good sense of every impartial reader.

To these measures of unexpected violence alone, it must be ascribed, that the Pretender had any party for him of strength sufficient to appear and act. These measures alone, produced the troubles that followed, and dyed the royal ermines of a prince, no way sanguinary, in blood. I am far from excusing one party, for suffering another to drive them into rebellion. I wish I could forget it myself. But there are two observations on that event, which I cannot refuse myself to make. One is, that the very manner in which this rebellion was begun, shows abundantly that it was a start of passion, a sudden frenzy of men transported by their resentment, and nothing less than the execution of a design long premeditated and prepared. The other is, that few examples are to be found in history, perhaps none, of what happened on this occasion, when the same men, in the same country, and in the compass of the same year, were ready to rise in arms against one prince without any national cause; and then provoked by the violence of their councils, the opposite faction to rise in actual rebellion against the successor.

These are some of the effects of maintaining divisions in a nation, and of governing by faction. I might descend into a detail of many fatal consequences that have followed from the first false step which was taken, when the present settlement was so avowedly made, on the narrow bottom of party. But I consider that this discourse is growing into length; that I have had, and shall have occasion to mention some of these consequences elsewhere; and that your own reflections on what has been said will more than supply what I omit to say in this place. Let me therefore conclude by repeating, that division has caused all the mischief we lament, that union can alone retrieve it, and that a great advance towards this union was the coalition of parties, so hap-

pily begun, so successfully carried on, and of late so unaccountably neglected, to say no worse. But let me add, that this union can never be complete, till it become a union of the head with the members, as well as of the members with one another ; and that such a union can never be expected till patriotism fills the throne, and faction be banished from the administration.

[*The first avowed publication of Edmund Burke was the VINDICATION OF NATURAL SOCIETY, by a late Noble Writer, which appeared in 1756, and was a most successful imitation of the style, thought, and language of Lord Bolingbroke. BURKE undertook in the person of Bolingbroke, and with the closest imitation of his impetuous and overbearing eloquence, to expose the crimes and wretchedness which have prevailed under every form of government. The critics were completely deceived; almost everybody received it as a posthumous work of Lord Bolingbroke.]*

PREFACE.

THE editor knows that the subject of this letter is not so fully handled as obviously it might ; it was not his design to say all that could possibly be said. It had been inexcusable to fill a large volume with the abuse of reason ; nor would such an abuse have been tolerable even for a few pages, if some under-plot of more consequence than the apparent design, had not been carried on.

Some persons have thought that the advantages of the state of nature ought to have been more fully displayed. This had undoubtedly been a very ample subject for declamation ; but they do not consider the character of the piece. The writers against religion, whilst they oppose every system, are wisely careful never to set up any of their own. If some inaccuracies in calculation, in reasoning, or in method, be found, perhaps these will not be looked upon as faults by the admirers of Lord Bolingbroke ; who will, the editor is afraid, observe much more of his lordship's character in such particulars of the following letter, than they are like to find of that rapid torrent of an impetuous and overbearing eloquence, and the variety of rich imagery for which that writer is justly admired.

A LETTER TO LORD * * * * .

BY EDMUND BURKE.

SHALL I venture to say, my lord, that in our late conversation, you were inclined to the party which you adopted rather by the feelings

of your good nature, than by the conviction of your judgment ? We laid open the foundations of society ; and you feared, that the curiosity of this search might endanger the ruin of the whole fabric. You would readily have allowed my principles, but you dreaded the consequences ; you thought, that having once entered upon these reasonings, we might be carried insensibly and irresistibly farther than at first we could either have imagined or wished. But for my part, my lord, I then thought, and am still of the same opinion, that error, and not truth of any kind, is dangerous ; that ill conclusions can only flow from false propositions ; and that, to know whether any proposition be true or false, it is a preposterous method to examine it by its apparent consequences.

These were the reasons which induced me to go so far into that inquiry ; and they are the reasons which direct me in all my inquiries. I had indeed often reflected on that subject before I could prevail on myself to communicate my reflections to anybody. They were generally melancholy enough ; as those usually are which carry us beyond the mere surface of things ; and which would undoubtedly make the lives of all thinking men extremely miserable, if the philosophy which caused the grief did not at the same time administer the comfort.

On considering political societies, their origin, their constitution, and their effects, I have sometimes been in a good deal more than doubt, whether the Creator did ever really intend man for a state of happiness. He has mixed in his cup a number of natural evils (in spite of the boasts of stoicism they are evils), and every endeavour which the art and policy of mankind has used from the beginning of the world to this day, in order to alleviate, or cure them, has only served to introduce new mischiefs, or to aggravate and inflame the old. Besides this, the mind of man itself is too active and restless a principle ever to settle on the true point of quiet. It discovers every day some craving want in a body, which really wants but little. It every day invents some new artificial rule to guide that nature which, if left to itself, were the best and surest guide. It finds out imaginary beings prescribing imaginary laws ; and then, it raises imaginary terrors to support a belief in the beings, and an obedience to the laws. Many things have been said, and very well undoubtedly, on the subjection in which we should preserve our bodies to the government of our understanding ; but enough has not been said upon the restraint which our bodily necessities ought to lay on the extravagant sublimities and rovings of our minds. The body, or, as some love to call it, our inferior nature, is wiser in its own plain way, and attends its own business more directly than the mind with all its boasted subtlety.

In the state of nature, without question, mankind was subjected to many and great inconveniences. Want of union, want of mutual assistance, want of a common arbitrator to resort to in their differences.

These were evils which they could not but have felt pretty severely on many occasions. The original children of the earth lived with their brethren of the other kinds in much equality. Their diet must have been confined almost wholly to the vegetable kind ; and the same tree, which in its flourishing state produced them berries, in its decay gave them a habitation. The mutual desires of the sexes uniting their bodies and affections, and the children, which are the results of these intercourses, introduced first the notion of society, and taught its conveniences. This society, founded in natural appetites and instincts, and not in any positive institution, I shall call natural society. Thus far nature went and succeeded ; but man would go farther. The great error of our nature is, not to know where to stop, not to be satisfied with any reasonable acquirement ; not to compound with our condition ; but to lose all we have gained by an insatiable pursuit after more. Man found a considerable advantage by this union of many persons to form one family ; he therefore judged that he would find his account proportionably in a union of many families into one body politic. And as nature has formed no bond of union to hold them together, he supplied this defect by laws.

This is political society. And hence the sources of what are usually called states, civil societies, or governments ; into some form of which, more extended or restrained, all mankind have gradually fallen. And since it has so happened, and that we owe an implicit reverence to all the institutions of our ancestors, we shall consider these institutions with all that modesty with which we ought to conduct ourselves in examining a received opinion ; but with all that freedom and candour which we owe to truth wherever we find it, or however it may contradict our own notions, or oppose our own interests. There is a most absurd and audacious method of reasoning avowed by some bigots and enthusiasts, and through fear assented to by some wiser and better men ; it is this. They argue against a fair discussion of popular prejudices, because, say they, though they would be found without any reasonable support, yet the discovery might be productive of the most dangerous consequences. Absurd and blasphemous notion ! as if all happiness was not connected with the practice of virtue, which necessarily depends upon the knowledge of truth ; that is, upon the knowledge of those unalterable relations which Providence has ordained that everything should bear to every other. These relations, which are truth itself, the foundation of virtue, and consequently, the only measures of happiness, should be likewise the only measures by which we should direct our reasoning. To these we should conform in good earnest ; and not think to force nature, and the whole order of her system, by a compliance with our pride and folly, to conform to our artificial regulations. It is by a conformity to this method we owe the discovery of the few truths we

know, and the little liberty and rational happiness we enjoy. We have something fairer play than a reasoner could have expected formerly; and we derive advantages from it which are very visible.

The fabric of superstition has in this our age and nation received much ruder shocks than it had ever felt before; and through the chinks and breaches of our prison, we see such glimmerings of light, and feel such refreshing airs of liberty, as daily raise our ardour for more. The miseries derived to mankind from superstition, under the name of religion, and of ecclesiastical tyranny under the name of church government, have been clearly and usefully exposed. We begin to think and to act from reason and from nature alone. This is true of several, but still is by far the majority in the same old state of blindness and slavery; and much is it to be feared that we shall perpetually relapse, whilst the real productive cause of all this superstitious folly, enthusiastical nonsense, and holy tyranny, continues to hold a reverend place in the estimation even of those who are otherwise enlightened.

Civil government borrows a strength from ecclesiastical; and artificial laws receive a sanction from artificial revelations. The ideas of religion and government are closely connected; and whilst we receive government as a thing necessary or even useful to our well-being, we shall in spite of us draw in, as a necessary though undesirable consequence, an artificial religion of some kind or other. To this the vulgar will always be voluntary slaves; and even those of a rank of understanding superior, will now and then involuntarily feel its influence. It is therefore of the deepest concernment to us to be set right in this point; and to be well satisfied whether civil government be such a protector from natural evils, and such a nurse and increaser of blessings, as those of warm imaginations promise. In such a discussion, far am I from proposing in the least to reflect on our most wise form of government; no more than I would in the freer parts of my philosophical writings, mean to object to the piety, truth, and perfection of our most excellent Church. Both I am sensible have their foundations on a rock. No discovery of truth can prejudice them. On the contrary, the more closely the origin of religion and government are examined, the more clearly their excellencies must appear. They come purified from the fire. My business is not with them. Having entered a protest against all objections from these quarters, I may the more freely inquire from history and experience, how far policy has contributed in all times to alleviate those evils which Providence, that perhaps has designed us for a state of imperfection, has imposed; how far our physical skill has cured our constitutional disorders; and whether it may not have introduced new ones, curable perhaps by no skill.

In looking over any state to form a judgment on it, it presents itself

in two lights, the external and the internal. The first, that relation which it bears in point of friendship or enmity to other states. The second, that relation which its component parts, the governing and the governed, bear to each other. The first part of the external view of all states, their relation as friends, makes so trifling a figure in history, that I am very sorry to say, it affords me but little matter on which to expatiate. The good offices done by one nation to its neighbour;¹ the support given in public distress; the relief afforded in general calamity; the protection granted in emergent danger; the mutual return of kindness and civility, would afford a very ample and very pleasing subject for history. But, alas! all the history of all times, concerning all nations, does not afford matter enough to fill ten pages, though it should be spun out by the wire-drawing amplification of a Guicciardini himself. The glaring side is that of enmity. War is the matter which fills all history, and consequently the only or almost the only view in which we can see the external of political society, is in a hostile shape; and the only actions, to which we have always seen, and still see all of them intent, are such as tend to the destruction of one another. War, says Machiavel, ought to be the only study of a prince; and by a prince, he means every sort of state, however constituted. He ought, says this great political doctor, to consider peace only as a breathing-time, which gives him leisure to contrive, and furnishes ability to execute military plans. A meditation on the conduct of political societies made old Hobbes imagine, that war was the state of nature; and truly, if a man judged of the individuals of our race by their conduct when united and packed into nations and kingdoms, he might imagine that every sort of virtue was unnatural and foreign to the mind of man.

The first accounts we have of mankind are but so many accounts of their butcheries. All empires have been cemented in blood; and in those early periods when the race of mankind began first to form themselves into parties and combinations, the first effect of the combination, and indeed the end for which it seems purposely formed, and best calculated, is their mutual destruction. All ancient history is dark and uncertain. One thing however is clear. There were conquerors and conquests in those days; and consequently, all that devastation, by which they are formed, and all that oppression, by which they are maintained. We know little of Sesostris, but that he led out of Egypt an army of above 700,000 men; that he overran the Mediterranean coast as far as Colchis; that in some places, he met but little resistance, and of course shed not a great deal of blood; but

¹ Had his lordship lived to our days, to have seen the noble relief given by this nation to the distressed Portuguese, he had perhaps owned this part of his argument a little weakened; but we do not think ourselves entitled to alter his lordship's words, but that we are bound to follow him exactly

that he found in others, a people who knew the value of their liberties, and sold them dear. Whoever considers the army this conqueror headed, the space he traversed, and the opposition he frequently met, with the natural accidents of sickness, and the dearth and badness of provision to which he must have been subject in the variety of climates and countries his march lay through ; if he knows anything, he must know, that even the conqueror's army must have suffered greatly ; and that, of this immense number, but a very small part could have returned to enjoy the plunder accumulated by the loss of so many of their companions, and the devastation of so considerable a part of the world. Considering, I say, the vast army headed by this conqueror, whose unwieldy weight was almost alone sufficient to wear down its strength, it will be far from excess to suppose that one half was lost in the expedition. If this was the state of the victorious, and from the circumstances, it must have been this at the least ; the vanquished must have had a much heavier loss, as the greatest slaughter is always in the flight, and great carnage did in those times and countries ever attend the first rage of conquest. It will therefore be very reasonable to allow on their account as much as, added to the losses of the conqueror, may amount to a million of deaths, and then we shall see this conqueror, the oldest we have on the records of history (though, as we have observed before, the chronology of these remote times is extremely uncertain), opening the scene by a destruction of at least one million of his species, unprovoked but by his ambition, without any motives but pride, cruelty, and madness, and without any benefit to himself (for Justin expressly tells us he did not maintain his conquests) ; but solely to make so many people, in so distant countries, feel experimentally, how severe a scourge Providence intends for the human race, when He gives one man the power over many, and arms his naturally impotent and feeble rage with the hands of millions, who know no common principle of action but a blind obedience to the passions of their despotic ruler.

The next personage who figures in the tragedies of this ancient theatre is Semiramis : for we have no particulars of Ninus, but that he made immense and rapid conquests, which doubtless were not compassed without the usual carnage. We see an army of above three millions employed by this martial queen in a war against the Indians. We see the Indians arming a yet greater ; and we behold a war continued with much fury, and with various success. This ends in the retreat of the queen, with scarce a third of the troops employed in the expedition ; an expedition, which at this rate must have cost 2,000,000 of souls on her part ; and it is not unreasonable to judge that the country which was the seat of war, must have been an equal sufferer. But I am content to detract from this, and to suppose that the Indians lost only half so much, and then the account stands thus :

in this war alone (for Semiramis had other wars), in this single reign, and in this one spot of the globe, did 3,000,000 of souls expire, with all the horrid and shocking circumstances which attend all wars, and in a quarrel in which none of the sufferers could have the least rational concern.

The Babylonian, Assyrian, Median, and Persian monarchies must have poured out seas of blood in their formation and in their destruction. The armies and fleets of Xerxes, their numbers, the glorious stand made against them, and the unfortunate event of all his mighty preparations, are known to everybody. In this expedition, draining half Asia of its inhabitants, he led an army of about 2,000,000 to be slaughtered, and wasted, by a thousand fatal accidents, in the same place where his predecessors had before by a similar madness consumed the flower of so many kingdoms, and wasted the force of so extensive an empire. It is a cheap calculation to say, that the Persian empire in its wars against the Greeks and Scythians, threw away at least four millions of its subjects, to say nothing of its other wars, and the losses sustained in them. These were their losses abroad; but the war was brought home to them, first by Agesilaus, and afterwards, by Alexander. I have not, in this retreat, the books necessary to make very exact calculations; nor is it necessary to give more than hints to one of your lordship's erudition. You will recollect his uninterrupted series of success. You will run over his battles. You will call to mind the carnage which was made. You will give a glance of the whole, and you will agree with me; that to form this hero no less than 1,200,000 lives must have been sacrificed; but no sooner had he fallen himself a sacrifice to his vices, than a thousand breaches were made for ruin to enter, and give the last hand to this scene of misery and destruction. His kingdom was rent and divided; which served to employ the more distinct parts to tear each other to pieces, and bury the whole in blood and slaughter. The kings of Syria and of Egypt, the kings of Pergamus and Macedon, without intermission worried each other for above two hundred years; until at last a strong power arising in the west, rushed in upon them and silenced their tumults, by involving all the contending parties in the same destruction. It is little to say, that the contentions between the successors of Alexander depopulated that part of the world of at least two millions.

The struggle between the Macedonians and Greeks, and before that the disputes of the Greek commonwealths among themselves, for an unprofitable superiority, form one of the bloodiest scenes in history. One is astonished how such a small spot could furnish men sufficient to sacrifice to the pitiful ambition of possessing five or six thousand more acres, or two or three more villages; yet to see the acrimony and bitterness with which this was disputed between the Athenians and Lacedemonians; what armies cut off; what fleets sunk and burnt;

what a number of cities sacked, and their inhabitants slaughtered and captive; one would be induced to believe the decision of the fate of mankind at least depended upon it! But these disputes ended as all such ever have done, and ever will do, in a real weakness of all parties; a momentary shadow, and dream of power in some one; and the subjection of all to the yoke of a stranger, who knows how to profit by their divisions. This at least was the case of the Greeks; and sure, from the earliest accounts of them to their absorption into the Roman empire, we cannot judge that their intestine divisions, and foreign wars, consumed less than three millions of their inhabitants.

What an Aceldama, what a field of blood, Sicily has been in ancient times, whilst the mode of its government was controverted between the republican and tyrannical parties, and the possession struggled for by the natives, the Greeks, the Carthaginians, and the Romans, your lordship will easily recollect. You will remember the total destruction of such bodies as an army of 300,000 men. You will find every page of its history dyed in blood, and blotted and confounded by tumults, rebellions, massacres, assassinations, proscriptions, and a series of horrors beyond the histories perhaps of any other nation in the world; though the histories of all nations are made up of similar matter. I once more excuse myself in point of exactness for want of books. But I shall estimate the slaughters in this island but at two millions, which your lordship will find much short of the reality.

Let us pass by the wars, and the consequences of them, which wasted Grecia-Magna, before the Roman power prevailed in that part of Italy. They are perhaps exaggerated, therefore I shall only rate them at one million. Let us hasten to open that great scene which establishes the Roman empire, and forms the grand catastrophe of the ancient drama. This empire, whilst in its infancy, began by an effusion of human blood scarcely credible. The neighbouring little states teemed for new destruction; the Sabines, the Samnites, the Æqui, the Volsci, the Etrurians, were broken by a series of slaughters which had no interruption for some hundreds of years, slaughters which upon all sides consumed more than two millions of the wretched people. The Gauls rushing into Italy about this time added the total destruction of their own armies to those of the ancient inhabitants. In short, it were hardly possible to conceive a more horrid and bloody picture, if that the Punic wars that ensued soon after did not present one, that far exceeds it. Here we find that climax of devastation and ruin which seemed to shake the whole earth. The extent of this war which vexed so many nations, and both elements, and the havoc of the human species caused in both, really astonishes beyond expression, when it is nakedly considered, and those matters which are apt to divert our attention from it, the characters, actions, and designs of the persons concerned, are not taken into the account. These wars, I mean those called

the Punic wars, could not have stood the human race in less than three millions of the species. And yet this forms but a part only, and a very small part, of the havoc caused by the Roman ambition. The war with Mithridates was very little less bloody; that prince cut off at one stroke 150,000 Romans by a massacre. In that war Sylla destroyed 300,000 men at Cheronea. He defeated Mithridates' army under Dorilaus, and slew 300,000. This great and unfortunate prince lost another 300,000 before Cyzicum. In the course of the war he had innumerable other losses; and having many intervals of success, he revenged them severely. He was at last totally overthrown; and he crushed to pieces the King of Armenia, his ally, by the greatness of his ruin. All who had connections with him shared the same fate. The merciless genius of Sylla had its full scope, and the streets of Athens were not the only ones which ran with blood. At this period, the sword, glutted with foreign slaughter, turned its edge upon the bowels of the Roman republic itself, and presented a scene of cruelties and treasons enough almost to obliterate the memory of all the external devastations. I intended, my lord, to have proceeded in a sort of method in estimating the numbers of mankind cut off in these wars which we have on record. But I am obliged to alter my design. Such a tragical uniformity of havoc and murder would disgust your lordship as much as it would me; and I confess I already feel my eyes ache by keeping them so long intent on so bloody a prospect. I shall observe little on the Servile, the Social, the Gallic, and Spanish wars; nor upon those with Jugurtha, nor Antiochus, nor many others equally important, and carried on with equal fury. The butcheries of Julius Cæsar alone are calculated by somebody else; the numbers he has been a means of destroying have been reckoned at 1,200,000. But to give your lordship an idea that may serve as a standard by which to measure, in some degree, the others, you will turn your eyes on Judea, a very inconsiderable spot of the earth in itself, though ennobled by the singular events which had their rise in that country.

This spot happened, it matters not here by what means, to become at several times extremely populous, and to supply men for slaughters scarcely credible, if other well-known and well-attested ones had not given them a colour. The first settling of the Jews here was attended by an almost entire extirpation of all the former inhabitants. Their own civil wars and those with their petty neighbours consumed vast multitudes almost every year for several centuries; and the irruptions of the kings of Babylon and Assyria made immense ravages. Yet we have their history but partially, in an indistinct confused manner; so that I shall only throw the strong point of light upon that part which coincides with Roman history, and of that part only on the point of time when they received the great and final stroke which made them no more a nation; a stroke which is allowed to have cut off little less

than two millions of that people. I say nothing of the loppings made from that stock whilst it stood; nor from the suckers that grew out of the old root ever since. But if in this inconsiderable part of the globe such a carnage has been made in two or three short reigns, and that this great carnage, great as it is, makes but a minute part of what the histories of that people inform us they suffered; what shall we judge of countries more extended, and which have waged wars by far more considerable?

Instances of this sort compose the uniform of history. But there have been periods when no less than universal destruction to the race of mankind seems to have been threatened. Such was that, when the Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns poured into Gaul, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Africa, carrying destruction before them as they advanced, and leaving horrid deserts every way behind them. ‘Vastum ubique ‘silentium, secreti colles; fumantia procul tecta; nemo exploratoribus ‘obvius,’ is what Tacitus calls ‘facies victoriæ.’ It is always so; but was here emphatically so. From the north proceeded the swarms of Goths, Vandals, Huns, Ostrogoths, who ran towards the south into Africa itself, which suffered as all to the north had done. About this time, another torrent of barbarians, animated by the same fury, and encouraged by the same success, poured out of the south, and ravaged all to the north-east and west, to the remotest parts of Persia on one hand, and to the banks of the Loire or farther on the other; destroying all the proud and curious monuments of human art, that not even the memory might seem to survive of the former inhabitants. What has been done since, and what will continue to be done while the same inducements to war continue, I shall not dwell upon. I shall only in one word mention the horrid effects of bigotry and avarice in the conquest of Spanish America; a conquest on a low estimation effected by the murder of ten millions of the species. I shall draw to a conclusion of this part by making a general calculation of the whole. I think I have actually mentioned above thirty-six millions. I have not particularised any more. I don't pretend to exactness; therefore, for the sake of a general view, I shall lay together all those actually slain in battles, or who have perished in a no less miserable manner by the other destructive consequences of war from the beginning of the world to this day, in the four parts of it, at a thousand times as much; no exaggerated calculation, allowing for time and extent. We have not, perhaps, spoken of the five-hundredth part: I am sure I have not of what is actually ascertained in history; but how much of these butcheries are only expressed in generals, what part of time history has never reached, and what vast spaces of the habitable globe it has not embraced, I need not mention to your lordship. I need not enlarge on those torrents of silent and inglorious blood which have glutted the thirsty sands of Afric, or discoloured the polar snow, or fed

the savage forests of America for so many ages of continual war. Shall I, to justify my calculations from the charge of extravagance, add to the account those skirmishes which happen in all wars, without being singly of sufficient dignity in mischief to merit a place in history, but which by their frequency compensate for this comparative innocence? shall I inflame the account by those general massacres which have devoured whole cities and nations; those wasting pestilences, those consuming famines, and all those furies that follow in the train of war? I have no need to exaggerate; and I have purposely avoided a parade of eloquence on this occasion. I should despise it upon any occasion; else in mentioning these slaughters, it is obvious how much the whole might be heightened by an affecting description of the horrors that attend the wasting of kingdoms and sacking of cities. But I do not write to the vulgar, nor to that which only governs the vulgar, their passions. I go upon a naked and moderate calculation, just enough, without a pedantical exactness, to give your lordship some feeling of the effects of political society. I charge the whole of these effects on political society. I avow the charge, and I shall presently make it good to your lordship's satisfaction. The numbers I particularized are about thirty-six millions. Besides those killed in battles I have said something, not half what the matter would have justified, but something I have said concerning the consequences of war even more dreadful than that monstrous carnage itself which shocks our humanity, and almost staggers our belief. So that allowing me in my exuberance one way, for my deficiencies in the other, you will find me not unreasonable. I think the number of men now upon earth are computed at five hundred millions at the most. Here the slaughter of mankind, on what you will call a small calculation, amounts to upwards of seventy times the number of souls this day on the globe: a point which may furnish matter of reflection to one less inclined to draw consequences than your lordship.

I now come to show that political society is justly chargeable with much the greatest part of this destruction of the species. To give the fairest play to every side of the question, I will own that there is a haughtiness and fierceness in human nature, which will cause innumerable broils, place men in what situation you please; but owning this, I still insist in charging it to political regulations that these broils are so frequent, so cruel, and attended with consequences so deplorable. In a state of nature it had been impossible to find a number of men sufficient for such slaughters, agreed in the same bloody purpose; or allowing that they might have come to such an agreement (an impossible supposition), yet the means that simple nature has supplied them with are by no means adequate to such an end; many scratches, many bruises undoubtedly will be received upon all hands; but only a few, a very few deaths. Society and politics, which have given us

these destructive views, have given us also the means of satisfying them. From the earliest dawning of policy to this day, the invention of men has been sharpening and improving the mystery of murder, from the first rude essays of clubs and stones, to the present perfection of gunnery, cannoneering, bombarding, mining, and all these species of artificial, learned, and refined cruelty, in which we are now so expert, and which make a principal part of what politicians have taught us to believe is our principal glory.

How far mere nature would have carried us, we may judge by the example of those animals who still follow her laws, and even of those to whom she has given dispositions more fierce and arms more terrible than ever she intended we should use. It is an incontestable truth, that there is more havock made in one year by men of men, than has been made by all the lions, tigers, panthers, ounces, leopards, hyenas, rhinoceroses, elephants, bears, and wolves, upon their several species, since the beginning of the world; though these agree ill enough with each other, and have a much greater proportion of rage and fury in their composition than we have. But with respect to you, ye legislators, ye civilisers of mankind! ye Orpheuses, Moseses, Minoses, Solons, Theseuses, Lycurguses, Numas! with respect to you be it spoken, your regulations have done more mischief in cold blood, than all the rage of the fiercest animals in their greatest terrors or furies has ever done, or ever could do!

These evils are not accidental. Whoever will take the pains to consider the nature of society, will find they result directly from its constitution. For as subordination, or in other words, the reciprocation of tyranny, and slavery, is requisite to support these societies, the interest, the ambition, the malice, or the revenge, nay even the whim and caprice of one ruling man among them, is enough to arm all the rest, without any private views of their own, to the worst and blackest purposes; and what is at once lamentable and ridiculous, these wretches engage under those banners with a fury greater than if they were animated by revenge for their own proper wrongs.

It is no less worth observing, that this artificial division of mankind, into separate societies, is a perpetual source in itself of hatred and dissension among them. The names which distinguish them are enough to blow up hatred and rage. Examine history, consult present experience, and you will find that far the greater part of the quarrels between several nations, had scarce any other occasion, than, that these nations were different combinations of people, and called by different names; to an Englishman, the name of a Frenchman, a Spaniard, an Italian, much more a Turk, or a Tartar, raises of course ideas of hatred and contempt. If you would inspire this compatriot of ours with pity or regard for one of these; would you not hide that distinction? You would not pray him to compassionate the poor Frenchman, or the un-

happy German. Far from it; you would speak of him as a foreigner, an accident to which all are liable. You would represent him as a man, one partaking with us of the same common nature, and subject to the same law. There is something so averse from our nature in these artificial political distinctions, that we need no other trumpet to kindle us to war and destruction. But there is something so benign and healing in the general voice of humanity, that maugre all our regulations to prevent it, the simple name of man applied properly, never fails to work a salutary effect.

This natural unpremeditated effect of policy on the unpossessed passions of mankind, appears on other occasions. The very name of a politician, a statesman, is sure to cause terror and hatred; it has always connected with it the ideas of treachery, cruelty, fraud, and tyranny; and those writers who have faithfully unveiled the mysteries of state freemasonry, have ever been held in general detestation, for even knowing so perfectly a theory so detestable. The case of Machiavel seems at first sight something hard in that respect. He is obliged to bear the iniquities of those whose maxims and rules of government he published. His speculation is more abhorred than their practice.

But if there were no other arguments against artificial society than this I am going to mention, methinks it ought to fall by this one only. All writers on the science of policy are agreed, and they agree with experience, that all governments must frequently infringe the rules of justice to support themselves; that truth must give way to dissimulation, honesty to convenience, and humanity itself to the reigning interest. The whole of this mystery of iniquity is called the reason of state. It is a reason which I own I cannot penetrate. What sort of a protection is this of the general right, that is maintained by infringing the rights of particulars? What sort of justice is this, which is enforced by breaches of its own laws? These paradoxes I leave to be solved by the able heads of legislators and politicians. For my part, I say what a plain man would say on such an occasion. I can never believe, that any institution agreeable to nature, and proper for mankind, could find it necessary, or even expedient in any case whatsoever to do, what the worthiest instincts of mankind warn us to avoid. But no wonder, that what is set up in opposition to the state of nature, should preserve itself by trampling upon the law of nature.

To prove that these sorts of policed societies are a violation offered to nature, and a constraint upon the human mind, it needs only to look upon the sanguinary measures, and instruments of violence which are everywhere used to support them. Let us take a review of the dungeons, whips, chains, racks, gibbets, with which every society is abundantly stored, by which hundreds of victims are annually offered up to support a dozen or two in pride and madness, and millions in an abject servitude and dependence. There was a time when I looked

with a reverential awe on these mysteries of policy; but age, experience, and philosophy have rent the veil; and I view this ‘sanctum ‘sanctorum,’ at least, without any enthusiastic admiration. I acknowledge indeed, the necessity of such a proceeding in such institutions; but I must have a very mean opinion of institutions where such proceedings are necessary.

It is a misfortune, that in no part of the globe natural liberty and natural religion are to be found pure, and free from the mixture of political adulterations. Yet we have implanted in us by Providence, ideas, axioms, rules, of what is pious, just, fair, honest, which no political craft, nor learned sophistry, can entirely expel from our breasts. By these we judge, and we cannot otherwise judge, of the several artificial modes of religion and society, and determine of them as they approach to or recede from this standard.

The simplest form of government is despotism, where all the inferior orbs of power are moved merely by the will of the supreme, and all that are subjected to them, directed in the same manner, merely by the occasional will of the magistrate. This form, as it is the most simple, so it is infinitely the most general. Scarce any part of the world is exempted from its power. And in those few places where men enjoy what they call liberty, it is continually in a tottering situation, and makes greater and greater strides to that gulf of despotism which at last swallows up every species of government. The manner of ruling being directed merely by the will of the weakest, and generally the worst man in the society, becomes the most foolish and capricious thing, at the same time that it is the most terrible and destructive, that well can be conceived. In a despotism the principal person finds, that let the want, misery, and indigence of his subjects be what they will, he can yet possess abundantly of everything to gratify his most insatiable wishes. He does more. He finds that these gratifications increase in proportion to the wretchedness and slavery of his subjects. Thus encouraged both by passion and interest to trample on the public welfare, and by his station placed above both shame and fear, he proceeds to the most horrid and shocking outrages upon mankind. Their persons become victims of his suspicions. The slightest displeasure is death; and a disagreeable aspect is often as great a crime as high treason. In the court of Nero, a person of learning, of unquestioned merit, and of unsuspected loyalty, was put to death for no other reason than that he had a pedantic countenance which displeased the emperor. This very monster of mankind appeared in the beginning of his reign to be a person of virtue. Many of the greatest tyrants on the records of history have begun their reigns in the fairest manner. But the truth is, this unnatural power corrupts both the heart and the understanding. And to prevent the least hope of amendment, a king is ever surrounded by a crowd of

infamous flatterers, who find their account in keeping him from the least light of reason, till all ideas of rectitude and justice are utterly erased from his mind. When Alexander had in his fury inhumanly butchered one of his best friends and bravest captains, on the return of reason he began to conceive a horror suitable to the guilt of such a murder. In this juncture, his council came to his assistance. But what did his council. They found him out a philosopher who gave him comfort. And in what manner did this philosopher comfort him for the loss of such a man, and heal his conscience, flagrant with the smart of such a crime? You have the matter at length in Plutarch. He told him; ‘that let a sovereign do what he will, all his actions are just and lawful, because they are his.’ The palaces of all princes abound with such courtly philosophers. The consequence was such as might be expected. He grew every day a monster more abandoned to unnatural lust, to debauchery, to drunkenness, and to murder. And yet this was originally a great man, of uncommon capacity, and a strong propensity to virtue. But unbounded power proceeds step by step, until it has eradicated every laudable principle. It has been remarked, that there is no prince so bad, whose favourites and ministers are not worse. There is hardly any prince without a favourite, by whom he is governed in as arbitrary a manner as he governs the wretches subjected to him. Here the tyranny is doubled. There are two courts, and two interests; both very different from the interests of the people. The favourite knows that the regard of a tyrant is as unconstant and capricious as that of a woman; and concluding his time to be short, he makes haste to fill up the measure of his iniquity, in rapine, in luxury, and in revenge. Every avenue to the throne is shut up. He oppresses and ruins the people, whilst he persuades the prince, that those murmurs raised by his own oppression are the effects of disaffection to the prince’s government. Then is the natural violence of despotism inflamed, and aggravated by hatred and revenge. To deserve well of the state is a crime against the prince. To be popular, and to be a traitor, are considered as synonymous terms. Even virtue is dangerous, as an aspiring quality, that claims an esteem by itself, and independent of the countenance of the court. What has been said of the chief, is true of the inferior officers of this species of government; each in his province exercising the same tyranny, and grinding the people by an oppression, the more severely felt, as it is near them, and exercised by base and subordinate persons. For the gross of the people, they are considered as a mere herd of cattle; and really in a little time become no better; all principle of honest pride, all sense of the dignity of their nature, is lost in their slavery. The day, says Homer, which makes a man a slave, takes away half his worth; and in fact, he loses every impulse to action, but that low and base one of

fear. In this kind of government human nature is not only abused and insulted, but it is actually degraded and sunk into a species of brutality. The consideration of this made Mr. Locke say, with great justice, that a government of this kind was worse than anarchy ; indeed it is so abhorred and detested by all who live under forms that have a milder appearance, that there is scarce a rational man in Europe, that would not prefer death to Asiatic despotism. Here then we have the acknowledgment of a great philosopher, that an irregular state of nature is preferable to such a government ; we have the consent of all sensible and generous men, who carry it yet further, and avow that death itself is preferable ; and yet this species of government, so justly condemned, and so generally detested, is what infinitely the greater part of mankind groan under, and have groaned under from the beginning. So that by sure and uncontested principles, the greatest part of the governments on earth must be concluded tyrannies, impostures, violations of the natural rights of mankind, and worse than the most disorderly anarchies. How much other forms exceed this, we shall consider immediately.

In all parts of the world, mankind, however debased, retain still the sense of feeling ; the weight of tyranny, at last, becomes insupportable ; but the remedy is not so easy ; in general, the only remedy by which they attempt to cure the tyranny, is to change the tyrant. This is, and always was the case for the greater part. In some countries, however, were found men of more penetration ; who discovered, ‘that ‘to live by one man’s will, was the cause of all men’s misery.’ They therefore changed their former method, and assembling the men in their several societies, the most respectable for their understanding and fortunes, they confided to them the charge of the public welfare. This originally formed what is called an aristocracy. They hoped it would be impossible that such a number could ever join in any design against the general good ; and they promised themselves a great deal of security and happiness, from the united councils of so many able and experienced persons. But it is now found by abundant experience, that an aristocracy and a despotism differ but in name, and that a people, who are in general excluded from any share of the legislative, are to all intents and purposes, as much slaves, when twenty, independent of them, govern, as when but one domineers. The tyranny is even more felt, as every individual of the nobles has the haughtiness of a sultan ; the people are more miserable, as they seem on the verge of liberty, from which they are for ever debarred ; this fallacious idea of liberty, whilst it presents a vain shadow of happiness to the subject, binds faster the chains of his subjection. What is left undone, by the natural avarice and pride of those who are raised above the others, is completed by their suspicions, and their dread of losing an authority, which has no support in the common

utility of the nation. A Genoese, or a Venetian republic, is a corrupted despotism; where you find the same pride of the rulers, the same base subjection of the people, the same bloody maxims of a suspicious policy. In one respect the aristocracy is worse than the despotism. A body politic, whilst it retains its authority, never changes its maxims: a despotism, which is this day horrible to a supreme degree, by the caprice natural to the heart of man, may, by the same caprice, be otherwise exerted, be as lovely the next; in a succession, it is possible to meet with some good princes. If there have been Tiberius, Caligulas, Neroes, there have been likewise the master days of Vespasians, Tituses, Trajans, and Antonines; but a body politic is not influenced by caprice, and every man as he enters it, either has, or soon attains the spirit of the whole body. Never was it better that an aristocracy, which was impious and tyrannical to one species, became easy and mild to the next. In effect, the yoke of this species of government is no greater, than whenever the people have got the least power, they have shaken it off with the utmost violence, and established a popular form. And when they have not had strength enough to support themselves, they have thrown themselves into the arms of despotism, as the more eligible of the two evils. The latter was the case of Denmark, who were delivered from the oppression of its nobility, in the triumph of arbitrary power. Poland has at present the name of regular, but the spirit of this aristocratical form; but it is well known, that the spirit of this government, is heavier than the laws of the most despotic nations. The people are not only reduced to the condition of subjects by every sort of yoke, that the nobles have, but also by every sort of liberty of reason, and the soul will think in a manner encouraging them to do so. The nobles keep to feast upon, wallow as much as they can, scandalously, with novices alike. Their body is subject to every means which can be employed to pervert the principles of all individuals.

and tyrannized over by about 2000 men ; and yet this body of 2000, are so far from enjoying any liberty by the subjection of the rest, that they are in an infinitely severer state of slavery ; they make themselves the most degenerate, and unhappy of mankind, for no other purpose than that they may the more effectually contribute to the misery of a whole nation. In short, the regular and methodical proceedings of an aristocracy, are more intolerable than the very excesses of a despotism, and in general, much further from any remedy.

Thus, my lord, we have pursued aristocracy through its whole progress ; we have seen the seeds, the growth, and the fruit. It could boast none of the advantages of a despotism, miserable as those advantages were, and it was overloaded with an exuberance of mischiefs, unknown even to despotism itself. In effect it is no more than a disorderly tyranny. This form therefore could be little approved, even in speculation, by those who were capable of thinking, and could be less borne in practice by any who were capable of feeling. However, the fruitful policy of man was not yet exhausted. He had yet another farthing candle to supply the deficiencies of the sun. This was the third form, known by political writers under the name of democracy. Here the people transacted all public business, or the greater part of it, in their own persons ; their laws were made by themselves, and upon any failure of duty, their officers were accountable to themselves, and to them only. In all appearance, they had secured by this method the advantages of order and good government, without paying their liberty for the purchase. Now, my lord, we are come to the masterpiece of Grecian refinement, and Roman solidity, a popular government. The earliest and most celebrated republic of this model, was that of Athens. It was constructed by no less an artist than the celebrated poet and philosopher, Solon. But no sooner was this political vessel launched from the stocks, than it overset, even in the lifetime of the builder. A tyranny immediately supervened ; not by a foreign conquest, not by accident, but by the very nature and constitution of a democracy. An artful man became popular, the people had power in their hands, and they devolved a considerable share of their power upon their favourite ; and the only use he made of this power, was to plunge those who gave it into slavery. Accident restored their liberty, and the same good fortune produced men of uncommon abilities and uncommon virtues amongst them. But these abilities were suffered to be of little service either to their possessors or to the state. Some of these men, for whose sakes alone we read their history, they banished ; others they imprisoned ; and all they treated with various circumstances of the most shameful ingratitude. Republics have many things in the spirit of absolute monarchy, but none more than this ; a shining merit is ever hated or suspected in a popular assembly, as well as in a court ; and all services done the state, are looked upon as dangerous to the rulers,

whether sultans or senators. The Ostracism at Athens was built upon this principle. The giddy people whom we have now under consideration, being elated with some flashes of success, which they owed to nothing less than any merit of their own, began to tyrannize over their equals, who had associated with them for their common defence. With their prudence they renounced all appearance of justice. They entered into wars rashly and wantonly. If they were unsuccessful, instead of growing wiser by their misfortune, they threw the whole blame of their own misconduct on the ministers who had advised, and the generals who had conducted those wars; until by degrees they had cut off all who could serve them in their councils or their battles. If at any time these wars had a happier issue, it was no less difficult to deal with them on account of their pride and insolence. Furious in their adversity, tyrannical in their successes, a commander had more trouble to concert his defence before the people, than to plan the operations of the campaign. It was not uncommon for a general, under the horrid despotism of the Roman emperors, to be ill received in proportion to the greatness of his services. Agricola is a strong instance of this. No man had done greater things, nor with more honest ambition. Yet on his return to court, he was obliged to enter Rome with all the secrecy of a criminal. He went to the palace, not like a victorious commander who had merited and might demand the greatest rewards, but like an offender who had come to supplicate a pardon for his crimes. His reception was answerable: ‘*Brevi osculo, et nullo sermone exceptus, turbæ servientium immistus est.*’ Yet in that worst season of this worst of monarchical¹ tyrannies, modesty, discretion, and a coolness of temper, formed some kind of security even for the highest merit. But at Athens, the nicest and best studied behaviour was not a sufficient guard for a man of great capacity. Some of their bravest commanders were obliged to fly their country, some to enter into the service of its enemies, rather than abide a popular determination on their conduct, lest, as one of them said, their giddiness might make the people condemn where they meant to acquit; to throw in a black bean where they intended a white one.

The Athenians made a very rapid progress to the most enormous excesses. The people under no restraint soon grew dissolute, luxurious, and idle. They renounced all labour, and began to subsist themselves from the public revenues. They lost all concern for their common honour or safety, and could bear no advice that tended to reform them. At this time truth became offensive to those lords the people, and most highly dangerous to the speaker. The orators no longer ascended the rostrum, but to corrupt them further with the most fulsome adulation. These orators were all bribed by foreign princes on the one side

¹ *Sciant quibus moris illicita mirari, posse etiam sub malis principibus magnos viros, etc.*
See 42 to the end of it.

or the other. And besides its own parties, in this city there were parties, and avowed ones too, for the Persians, Spartans, and Macedonians, supported each of them by one or more demagogues pensioned and bribed to this iniquitous service. The people, forgetful of all virtue and public spirit, and intoxicated with the flatteries of their orators (these courtiers of republics, and endowed with the distinguishing characteristics of all other courtiers) this people, I say, at last arrived at that pitch of madness, that they coolly and deliberately, by an express law, made it capital for any man to propose an application of the immense sums squandered in public shows, even to the most necessary purposes of the state. When you see the people of this republic banishing and murdering their best and ablest citizens, dissipating the public treasure with the most senseless extravagance, and spending their whole time, as spectators or actors, in playing, fiddling, dancing, and singing, does it not, my lord, strike your imagination with the image of a sort of complex Nero? And does it not strike you with the greater horror, when you observe, not one man only, but a whole city, grown drunk with pride and power, running with a rage of folly into the same mean and senseless debauchery and extravagance? But if this people resembled Nero in their extravagance, much more did they resemble and even exceed him in cruelty and injustice. In the time of Pericles, one of the most celebrated times in the history of that commonwealth, a king of Egypt sent them a donation of corn. This they were mean enough to accept. And had the Egyptian prince intended the ruin of this city of wicked bedlamites, he could not have taken a more effectual method to do it, than by such an ensnaring largess. The distribution of this bounty caused a quarrel; the majority set on foot an inquiry into the title of the citizens; and upon a vain pretence of illegitimacy, newly and occasionally set up, they deprived of their share of the royal donation no less than five thousand of their own body. They went further; they disfranchised them; and having once begun with an act of injustice, they could set no bounds to it. Not content with cutting them off from the rights of citizens, they plundered these unfortunate wretches of all their substance; and to crown this master-piece of violence and tyranny, they actually sold every man of the five thousand as slaves in the public market. Observe, my lord, that the 5000 we here speak of, were cut off from a body of no more than 19,000; for the entire number of citizens was no greater at that time. Could the tyrant who wished the Roman people but one neck; could the tyrant Caligula himself have done, nay, he could scarcely wish for, a greater mischief, than to have cut off, at one stroke, a fourth of his people? Or has the cruelty of that series of sanguine tyrants, the Cæsars, ever presented such a piece of flagrant and extensive wickedness? The whole history of this celebrated republic is but one tissue of rashness, folly, ingratitude, injustice, tumult, violence,

and tyranny, and indeed of every species of wickedness that can well be imagined. This was a city of wise men, in which a minister could not exercise his functions; a warlike people, amongst whom a general did not dare either to gain or lose a battle; a learned nation in which a philosopher could not venture on a free inquiry. This was the city which banished Themistocles, starved Aristides, forced into exile Miltiades, drove out Anaxagoras, and poisoned Socrates. This was a city which changed the form of its government with the moon; eternal conspiracies, revolutions daily, nothing fixed and established. A republic, as an ancient philosopher has observed, is no one species of government, but a magazine of every species; here you find every sort of it, and that in the worst form. As there is a perpetual change, the one rising and the other falling, you have all the violence and the wicked policy, by which a beginning power must always acquire its strength, and all the weakness by which falling states are brought to a complete destruction.

Rome has a more venerable aspect than Athens; and she conducted her affairs, so far as related to the ruin and oppression of the greatest part of the world, with greater wisdom and more uniformity. But the domestic economy of these two states was nearly or altogether the same. An internal dissension constantly tore to pieces the bowels of the Roman commonwealth. You find the same confusion, the same factions, which subsisted at Athens, the same tumults, the same revolutions, and in fine, the same slavery; if perhaps their former condition did not deserve that name altogether as well. All other republics were of the same character. Florence was a transcript of Athens. And the modern republics, as they approach more or less to the democratic form, partake also more or less of the nature of those which I have described.

We are now at the close of our review of the three simple forms of artificial society, and we have shown them, however they may differ in name, or in some slight circumstances, to be all alike in effect; in effect, to be all tyrannies. But suppose we were inclined to make the most ample concessions; let us concede Athens, Rome, Carthage, and two or three more of the ancient, and as many of the modern commonwealths, to have been, or to be, free and happy, and to owe their freedom and happiness to their political constitution. Yet allowing all this, what defence does this make for artificial society in general, that these inconsiderable spots of the globe have for some short space of time, stood as exceptions to a charge so general? But when we call these governments free, or concede that their citizens were happier than those which lived under different forms, it is merely '*ex abundanti*.' For we should be greatly mistaken, if we really thought that the majority of the people which filled these cities, enjoyed even that nominal political freedom of which I have spoken so much already. In reality, they had

no part of it. In Athens there were usually from ten to thirty thousand freemen ; this was the utmost. But the slaves usually amounted to 400,000, and sometimes to a great many more. The freemen of Sparta and Rome were not more numerous in proportion to those whom they held in a slavery, even more terrible than the Athenean. Therefore state the matter fairly ; the free states never formed, though they were taken altogether, the thousandth part of the habitable globe ; the free-men in these states were never the twentieth part of the people, and the time they subsisted is scarce anything in that immense ocean of duration in which time and slavery are so nearly commensurate. Therefore call these free states, or popular governments, or what you please ; when we consider the majority of their inhabitants, and regard the natural rights of mankind, they must appear in reality and truth, no better than pitiful and oppressive oligarchies.

After so fair an examen, wherein nothing has been exaggerated, no fact produced which cannot be proved, and none which has been produced in anywise forced or strained, while thousands have, for brevity, been omitted ; after so candid a discussion in all respects ; what slave so passive, what bigot so blind, what enthusiast so headlong, what politician so hardened, as to stand up in defence of a system calculated for a curse to mankind ? a curse under which they smart and groan to this hour, without thoroughly knowing the nature of the disease, and wanting understanding or courage to supply the remedy.

I need not excuse myself to your lordship, nor, I think, to any honest man, for the zeal I have shown in this cause ; for it is an honest zeal, and in a good cause. I have defended natural religion against a confederacy of atheists and divines. I now plead for natural society against politicians, and for natural reason against all three. When the world is in a fitter temper than it is at present to hear truth, or when I shall be more indifferent about its temper ; my thoughts may become more public. In the meantime let them repose in my own bosom and in the bosoms of such men as are fit to be initiated in the sober mysteries of truth and reason. My antagonists have already done as much as I could desire. Parties in religion and politics make sufficient discoveries concerning each other, to give a sober man a proper caution against them all. The monarchic and aristocratical, and popular partisans have been jointly laying their axes to the root of all government, and have in their turns proved each other absurd and inconvenient. In vain you tell me that artificial government is good, but that I fall out only with the abuse. The thing—the thing itself—is the abuse ! Observe, my lord, I pray you, that grand error upon which all artificial legislative power is founded. It was observed, that men had ungovernable passions, which made it necessary to guard against the violence they might offer to each other. They appointed governors over them for this reason ! But a worse and more perplexing difficulty arises, how

EXHIBIT. 1

to be defended against.
In van der Swaelm's
the passions of the soul
to secure the welfare
the general public.
their passions are re-
membered by the author
by their number.

are much exercised, where the houses are built of combustible materials, and where they stand extremely close.

In the second place, the several constituent parts having their distinct rights, and these many of them so necessary to be determined with exactness, are yet so indeterminate in their nature, that it becomes a new and constant source of debate and confusion. Hence it is, that whilst the business of government should be carrying on, the question is, Who has a right to exercise this or that function of it, or what men have power to keep their offices in any function? Whilst this contest continues, and whilst the balance in any sort continues, it has never any remission; all manner of abuses and villanies in officers remain unpunished; the greatest frauds and robberies in the public revenues are committed in defiance of justice; and abuses grow, by time and impunity, into customs; until they prescribe against the laws, and may grow too inveterate often to admit a cure, unless such as may be as bad as the disease.

Thirdly, the several parts of this species of government, though united, preserve the spirit which each form has separately. Kings are ambitious, the nobility haughty, and the populace tumultuous and ungovernable. Each party, however, in appearance peaceable, carries on a design upon others; and it is owing to this, that in all questions, whether concerning foreign or domestic affairs, the whole generally turns more upon some party matter than upon the nature of the thing itself; whether such a step will diminish or augment the power of the crown, or how far the privileges of the subject are like to be extended or restricted by it. And these questions are constantly resolved, without any consideration of the merits of the cause, merely as the parties who uphold these jarring interests may chance to prevail; and as they prevail the balance is overset, now upon one side, now upon the other. The government is one day arbitrary power in a single person; another, a juggling confederacy of a few to cheat the prince and enslave the people; and a third, a frantic and unmanageable democracy. The great instrument of all these changes, and what infuses a peculiar venom into all of them, is party. It is of no consequence what the principles of any party, or what their pretensions are; the spirit which actuates all parties is the same, the spirit of ambition, of self-interest, of oppression, and treachery. This spirit entirely reverses all the principles which a benevolent nature has erected within us; all honesty, all equal justice, and even the ties of natural society, the natural affections. In a word, my lord, we have all seen, and if any outward considerations were worthy the lasting concern of a wise man, we have some of us felt such oppression from party government as no other tyranny can parallel. We behold daily the most important rights, rights upon which all the others depend, we behold these rights determined in the last resort, without the least attention even to the appear-

ance or colour of justice; we behold this without emotion, because we have grown up in the constant view of such practices; and we are not surprised to hear a man requested to be a knave and a traitor, with as much indifference as if the most ordinary favour were asked; and we hear this request refused, not because it is a most unjust and unreasonable desire, but that this worthy has already engaged his injustice to another. These and many more points I am far from spreading to their full extent. You are sensible that I do not put forth half my strength; and you cannot be at a loss for the reason. A man is allowed sufficient freedom of thought, provided he knows how to choose his subject properly. You may criticise freely upon the Chinese constitution, and observe with as much severity as you please upon the absurd tricks, or destructive bigotry of the bonzes. But the scene is changed as you come homeward, and atheism or treason may be the names given in Britain to what would be reason and truth if asserted of China. I submit to the condition, and though I have a notorious advantage before me, I wave the pursuit. For else, my lord, it is very obvious what a picture might be drawn of the excesses of party even in our own nation. I could show that the same faction has in one reign promoted popular seditions, and in the next been a patron of tyranny; I could show that they have all of them betrayed the public safety at all times, and have very frequently with equal perfidy made a market of their own cause and their own associates; I could show how vehemently they have contended for names, and how silently they have passed over things of the last importance; and I could demonstrate that they have had the opportunity of doing all this mischief, nay, that they themselves had their origin and growth from that complex form of government which we are wisely taught to look upon as so great a blessing. Revolve, my lord, our history from the conquest. We scarce ever had a prince, who by fraud or violence had not made some infringement on the constitution. We scarce ever had a parliament which knew, when it attempted to set limits to the royal authority, how to set limits to its own. Evils we have had continually calling for reformation, and reformations more grievous than any evils. Our boasted liberty, sometimes trodden down, sometimes giddily set up, and ever precariously fluctuating and unsettled; it has only been kept alive by the blasts of continual feuds, wars, and conspiracies. In no country in Europe has the scaffold so often blushed with the blood of its nobility. Confiscations, banishments, attainders, executions, make a large part of the history of such of our families as are not utterly extinguished by them. Formerly indeed things had a more ferocious appearance than they have at this day. In these early and unrefined ages the jarring parts of a certain chaotic constitution supported their several pretensions by the sword. Experience and policy have since taught other methods.

'At nunc res agitur tenui pulmone rubetæ.'

But how far corruption, venality, the contempt of honour, the oblivion of all duty to our country, and the most abandoned public prostitution, are preferable to the more glaring and violent effects of faction, I will not presume to determine. Sure I am they are very great evils.

I have done with the forms of government. During the course of my inquiry you may have observed a very material difference between my manner of reasoning and that which is in use amongst the abettors of artificial society. They form their plans upon what seems most eligible to their imaginations, for the ordering of mankind. I discover the mistakes in those plans, from the real known consequences which have resulted from them. They have enlisted reason to fight against itself, and employ its whole force to prove that it is an insufficient guide to them in the conduct of their lives. But unhappily for us, in proportion as we have deviated from the plain rule of our nature, and turned our reason against itself, in that proportion have we increased the follies and miseries of mankind. The more deeply we penetrate into the labyrinth of art, the further we find ourselves from those ends for which we entered it. This has happened in almost every species of artificial society, and in all times. We found, or thought we found, an inconvenience in having every man the judge of his own cause. Therefore judges were set up at first with discretionary powers. But it was soon found a miserable slavery to have our lives and properties precarious, and hanging upon the arbitrary determination of any one man, or set of men. We flew to laws as a remedy for this evil. By these we persuaded ourselves we might know with some certainty upon what ground we stood. But lo! differences arose upon the sense and interpretation of these laws. Thus we were brought back to our old incertitude. New laws were made to expound the old, and new difficulties arose upon the new laws; as words multiplied, opportunities of cavilling upon them multiplied also. Then recourse was had to notes, comments, glosses, reports, 'responsa prudentum,' learned readings; eagle stood against eagle; authority was set up against authority. Some were allured by the modern, others reverenced the ancient. The new were more enlightened, the old were more venerable. Some adopted the comment, others stuck to the text. The confusion increased, the mist thickened, until it could be discovered no longer what was allowed or forbidden, what things were in property, and what common. In this uncertainty (uncertain even to professors, an Egyptian darkness to the rest of mankind), the contending parties felt themselves more effectually ruined by the delay than they could have been by the injustice of any decision. Our inheritances are become a prize for disputation, and disputes and litigations are become an inheritance.

The professors of artificial law have always walked hand in hand

with the professors of artificial theology. As their end, in confounding the reason of man, and abridging his natural freedom, is exactly the same, they have adjusted the means to that end in a way entirely similar. The divine thunders out his anathemas with more noise and terror against the breach of one of his positive institutions, or the neglect of some of his trivial forms, than against the neglect or breach of those duties and commandments of natural religion, which by these forms and institutions he pretends to enforce. The lawyer has his forms, and his positive institutions too, and he adheres to them with a veneration altogether as religious. The worst cause cannot be so prejudicial to the litigant, as his advocate's or attorney's ignorance or neglect of these forms. A lawsuit is like an ill-managed dispute, in which the first object is soon out of sight, and the parties end upon a matter wholly foreign to that on which they began. In a lawsuit the question is, who has a right to a certain house or farm? And this question is daily determined, not upon the evidence of the right, but upon the observance or neglect of some forms of words in use with the gentlemen of the robe, about which there is even amongst themselves such a disagreement, that the most experienced veterans in the profession can never be positively assured that they are not mistaken.

Let us expostulate with these learned sages, these priests of the sacred temple of justice. Are we judges of our own property? By no means. You, then, who are initiated into the mysteries of the blindfold goddess, inform me whether I have a right to eat the bread I have earned by the hazard of my life or the sweat of my brow? The grave doctor answers me in the affirmative; the reverend serjeant replies in the negative; the learned barrister reasons upon one side and upon the other, and concludes nothing. What shall I do? An antagonist starts up and presses me hard. I enter the field, and retain these three persons to defend my cause. My cause, which two farmers from the plough could have decided in half an hour, takes the court twenty years. I am however at the end of my labour, and have in reward for all my toil and vexation, a judgment in my favour. But hold! a sagacious commander in the adversary's army, has found a flaw in the proceeding. My triumph is turned into mourning. I have used or instead of and, or some mistake, small in appearance, but dreadful in its consequences, and have the whole of my success quashed in a writ of error. I remove my suit; I shift from court to court; I fly from equity to law, and from law to equity; equal uncertainty attends me everywhere; and a mistake in which I had no share, decides at once upon my liberty and property, sending me from the court to a prison, and adjudging my family to beggary and famine. I am innocent, gentlemen, of the darkness and uncertainty of your science. I never darkened it with absurd and contradictory notions, nor confounded it with chicane and sophistry. You have excluded me

from any share in the conduct of my own cause ; the science was too deep for me ; I acknowledged it ; but it was too deep even for yourselves ; you have made the way so intricate, that you are yourselves lost in it ; you err, and you punish me for your errors.

The delay of the law is, your lordship will tell me, a trite topic, and which of its abuses have not been too severely felt not to be complained of ? A man's property is to serve for the purposes of his support ; and therefore to delay a determination concerning that is the worst injustice, because it cuts off the very end and purpose for which I applied to the judicature for relief. Quite contrary in the case of a man's life ; there the determination can hardly be too much protracted. Mistakes in this case are as often fallen into as in any other, and if the judgment is sudden, the mistakes are the most irretrievable of all others. Of this the gentlemen of the robe are themselves sensible, and they have brought it into a maxim. '*De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa.*' But what could have induced them to reverse the rules, and to contradict that reason which dictated them, I am utterly unable to guess. A point concerning property, which ought, for the reasons I just mentioned, to be most speedily decided, frequently exercises the wit of successions of lawyers for many generations. '*Multa virūm volvens durando sæcula vincit.*' But the question concerning a man's life, that great question in which no delay ought to be counted tedious, is commonly determined in twenty-four hours at the utmost. It is not to be wondered at that injustice and absurdity should be inseparable companions.

Ask of politicians the end for which laws were originally designed ; and they will answer, that the laws were designed as a protection for the poor and weak, against the oppression of the rich and powerful. But surely no pretence can be so ridiculous ; a man might as well tell me he has taken off my load because he has changed the burden. If the poor man is not able to support his suit, according to the vexatious and expensive manner established in civilized countries, has not the rich as great an advantage over him as the strong has over the weak in a state of nature ? But we will not place the state of nature, which is the reign of God, in competition with political society, which is the absurd usurpation of man. In a state of nature, it is true, that a man of superior force may beat or rob me ; but then it is true, that I am at full liberty to defend myself, or make reprisal by surprise or by cunning, or by any other way in which I may be superior to him. But in political society, a rich man may rob me in another way. I cannot defend myself ; for money is the only weapon with which we are allowed to fight. And if I attempt to avenge myself, the whole force of that society is ready to complete my ruin.

A good parson once said, that where mystery begins, religion ends. Cannot I say, as truly at least, of human laws, that where mystery

begins, justice ends? It is hard to say, whether the doctors of law or divinity have made the greater advances in the lucrative business of mystery. The lawyers, as well as the theologians, have erected another reason besides natural reason; and the result has been, another justice besides natural justice. They have so bewildered the world and themselves in unmeaning forms and ceremonies, and so perplexed the plainest matters with metaphysical jargon, that it carries the highest danger to a man out of that profession, to make the least step without their advice and assistance. Thus by confining to themselves the knowledge of the foundation of all men's lives and properties, they have reduced all mankind into the most abject and servile dependence. We are tenants at the will of these gentlemen for everything; and a metaphysical quibble is to decide whether the greatest villain breathing shall meet his deserts, or escape with impunity, or whether the best man in the society shall not be reduced to the lowest and most despicable condition it affords. In a word, my lord, the injustice, delay, puerility, false refinement, and affected mystery of the law are such, that many who live under it come to admire and envy the expedition, simplicity, and equality of arbitrary judgments. I need insist the less on this article to your lordship, as you have frequently lamented the miseries derived to us from artificial law, and your candour is the more to be admired and applauded in this, as your lordship's noble house has derived its wealth and its honours from that profession.

Before we finish our examination of artificial society, I shall lead your lordship into a closer consideration of the relations which it gives birth to, and the benefits, if such they are, which result from these relations. The most obvious division of society is into rich and poor; and it is no less obvious, that the number of the former bears a great disproportion to those of the latter. The whole business of the poor is to administer to the idleness, folly, and luxury of the rich; and that of the rich, in return, is to find the best methods of confirming the slavery and increasing the burdens of the poor. In a state of nature it is an invariable law, that a man's acquisitions are in proportion to his labours. In a state of artificial society, it is a law as constant and as invariable, that those who labour most, enjoy the fewest things; and that those who labour not at all, have the greatest number of enjoyments. A constitution of things this, strange and ridiculous beyond expression. We scarce believe a thing when we are told it, which we actually see before our eyes every day without being in the least surprised. I suppose that there are in Great Britain upwards of a hundred thousand people employed in lead, tin, iron, copper, and coal mines; these unhappy wretches scarce ever see the light of the sun; they are buried in the bowels of the earth; there they work at a severe and dismal task, without the least prospect of being delivered from it; they subsist upon the coarsest and worst sort of fare; they

have their health miserably impaired, and their lives cut short, by being perpetually confined in the close vapour of these malignant minerals. An hundred thousand more at least are tortured without remission by the suffocating smoke, intense fires, and constant drudgery necessary in refining and managing the products of those mines. If any man informed us that two hundred thousand innocent persons were condemned to so intolerable slavery, how should we pity the unhappy sufferers, and how great would be our just indignation against those who inflicted so cruel and ignominious a punishment ! This is an instance, I could not wish a stronger, of the numberless things which we pass by in their common dress, yet which shock us when they are nakedly represented. But this number, considerable as it is, and the slavery with all its baseness and horror which we have at home, is nothing to what the rest of the world affords of the same nature. Millions daily bathed in the poisonous damps and destructive effluvia of lead, silver, copper, and arsenic. To say nothing of those other employments, those stations of wretchedness and contempt, in which civil society has placed the numerous enfans perdus of her army. Would any rational man submit to one of the most tolerable of these drudgeries for all the artificial enjoyments which policy has made to result from them ? By no means. And yet need I suggest to your lordship, that those who find the means, and those who arrive at the end, are not at all the same persons. On considering the strange and unaccountable fancies and contrivances of artificial reason, I have somewhere called this earth the Bedlam of our system. Looking now upon the effects of some of those fancies, may we not with equal reason call it likewise the Newgate and the Bridewell of the universe ? Indeed, the blindness of one part of mankind co-operating with the frenzy and villany of the other, has been the real builder of this respectable fabric of political society ; and as the blindness of mankind has caused their slavery, in return their state of slavery is made a pretence for continuing them in a state of blindness ; for the politician will tell you gravely, that their life of servitude disqualifies the greater part of the race of man for a search of truth, and supplies them with no other than mean and insufficient ideas. This is but too true ; and this is one of the reasons for which I blame such institutions.

In a misery of this sort, admitting some few lenitives, and those, too, but a few, nine parts in ten of the whole race of mankind drudge through life. It may be urged, perhaps, in palliation of this, that, at least, the rich few find a considerable and real benefit from the wretchedness of the many. But is this so in fact ? Let us examine the point with a little more attention. For this purpose the rich in all societies may be thrown into two classes. The first is of those who are powerful as well as rich, and conduct the operations of the vast political machine. The other is of those who employ their riches

wholly in the acquisition of pleasure. As to the first sort, their continual care and anxiety, their toilsome days and sleepless nights, are next to proverbial. These circumstances are sufficient almost to level their condition to that of the unhappy majority; but there are other circumstances which place them in a far lower condition. Not only their understandings labour continually, which is the severest labour, but their hearts are torn by the worst, most troublesome, and insatiable of all passions, by avarice, by ambition, by fear, and jealousy. No part of the mind has rest. Power gradually extirpates from the mind every humane and gentle virtue. Pity, benevolence, friendship, are things almost unknown in high stations. ‘Veræ amicitiae rarissime inveniuntur in iis qui in honoribus reque publica versantur,’ says Cicero. And, indeed, courts are the schools where cruelty, pride dissimulation, and treachery are studied and taught in the most vicious perfection. This is a point so clear and acknowledged, that if it did not make a necessary part of my subject I should pass it by entirely. And this has hindered me from drawing at full length, and in the most striking colours, this shocking picture of the degeneracy and wretchedness of human nature, in that part which is vulgarly thought its happiest and most amiable state. You know from what originals I could copy such pictures. Happy are they who know enough of them to know the little value of the possessors of such things, and of all that they possess; and happy they who have been snatched from that post of danger which they occupy, with the remains of their virtue; loss of honours, wealth, titles, and even the loss of one’s country, is nothing in balance with so great an advantage.

Let us now view the other species of the rich, those who devote their time and fortunes to idleness and pleasure. How much happier are they? The pleasures which are agreeable to nature are within the reach of all, and therefore can form no distinction in favour of the rich. The pleasures which art forces up are seldom sincere, and never satisfying. What is worse, this constant application to pleasure takes away from the enjoyment, or rather turns it into the nature of a very burdensome and laborious business. It has consequences much more fatal. It produces a weak valetudinary state of body, attended by all those horrid disorders, and yet more horrid methods of cure, which are the result of luxury on one hand, and the weak and ridiculous efforts of human art on the other. The pleasures of such men are scarcely felt as pleasures; at the same time that they bring on pains and diseases which are felt but too severely. The mind has its share of the misfortune; it grows lazy and enervate, unwilling and unable to search for truth, and utterly incapable of knowing, much less of relishing, real happiness. The poor by their excessive labour, and the rich by their enormous luxury, are set upon a level, and rendered equally ignorant of any knowledge which might conduce to their happiness. A dismal

view of the interior of all civil society ! The lower part broken and ground down by the most cruel oppression ; and the rich by their artificial method of life, bringing worse evils on themselves than their tyranny could possibly inflict on those below them. Very different is the prospect of the natural state. Here there are no wants which nature gives ; and in this state men can be sensible of no other wants which are not to be supplied by a very moderate degree of labour ; therefore there is no slavery. Neither is there any luxury, because no single man can supply the materials of it. Life is simple, and therefore it is happy.

I am conscious, my lord, that your politician will urge in his defence that this unequal state is highly useful. That without dooming some part of mankind to extraordinary toil, the arts which cultivate life could not be exercised. But I demand of this politician, how such arts came to be necessary ? He answers, that civil society could not well exist without them. So that these arts are necessary to civil society, and civil society necessary again to these arts. Thus are we running in a circle, without modesty, and without end, and making one error and extravagance an excuse for the other. My sentiments about these arts and their cause I have often discoursed with my friends at large. Pope has expressed them in good verse, where he talks with so much force of reason and elegance of language in praise of the state of nature .

‘Then was not pride, nor arts that pride to aid,
Man walked with beast, joint-tenant of the shade.’

On the whole, my lord, if political society, in whatever form, has still made the many the property of the few ; if it has introduced labours unnecessary, vices and diseases unknown, and pleasures incompatible with nature ; if in all countries it abridges the lives of millions, and renders those of millions more utterly abject and miserable, shall we still worship so destructive an idol, and daily sacrifice to it our health, our liberty, and our peace ? Or shall we pass by this monstrous heap of absurd notions, and abominable practices, thinking we have sufficiently discharged our duty in exposing the trifling cheats, and ridiculous juggles of a few mad, designing, or ambitious priests ? Alas ! my lord, we labour under a mortal consumption, whilst we are so anxious about the cure of a sore finger. For has not this leviathan of civil power overflowed the earth with a deluge of blood, as if he were made to disport and play therein ? We have shown, that political society, on a moderate calculation, has been the means of murdering several times the number of inhabitants now upon the earth, during its short existence, not upwards of 4000 years in any accounts to be depended on. But we have said nothing of the other, and perhaps as bad consequence of these wars, which have spilled such seas of blood, and reduced so many millions to a merciless

slavery. But these are only the ceremonies performed in the porch of the political temple. Much more horrid ones are seen as you enter it. The several species of government vie with each other in the absurdity of their constitutions, and the oppression which they make their subjects endure. Take them under what form you please, they are in effect but a despotism, and they fall, both in effect and appearance too, after a very short period, into that cruel and detestable species of tyranny ; which I rather call it, because we have been educated under another form than that, this is of worse consequences to mankind. For the free governments, for the point of their space, and the moment of their duration, have felt more confusion, and committed more flagrant acts of tyranny, than the most perfect despotic governments which we have ever known. Turn your eye next to the labyrinth of the law, and the iniquity conceived in its intricate recesses. Consider the ravages committed in the bowels of all commonwealths by ambition, by avarice, envy, fraud, open injustice, and pretended friendship ; vices which could draw little support from a state of nature, but which blossom and flourish in the rankness of political society. Revolve our whole discourse ; add to it all those reflections which your own good understanding shall suggest, and make a strenuous effort beyond the reach of vulgar philosophy, to confess that the cause of artificial society is more defenceless even than that of artificial religion ; that it is as derogatory from the honour of the Creator, as subversive of human reason, and productive of infinitely more mischief to the human race.

If pretended revelations have caused wars where they were opposed, and slavery where they were received, the pretended wise inventions of politicians have done the same. But the slavery has been much heavier, the wars far more bloody, and both more universal by many degrees. Show me any mischief produced by the madness or wickedness of theologians, and I will show you a hundred, resulting from the ambition and villany of conquerors and statesmen. Show me an absurdity in religion, and I will undertake to show you a hundred for one in political laws and institutions. If you say, that natural religion is a sufficient guide without the foreign aid of revelation, on what principle should political laws become necessary ? Is not the same reason available in theology and in politics ? If the laws of nature are the laws of God, is it consistent with the Divine wisdom to prescribe rules to us, and leave the enforcement of them to the folly of human institutions ? Will you follow truth but to a certain point ?

We are indebted for all our miseries to our distrust of that guide, which Providence thought sufficient for our condition, our own natural reason, which, rejecting both in human and divine things, we have given our necks to the yoke of political and theological slavery. We have renounced the prerogative of man, and it is no wonder that we should

be treated like beasts. But our misery is much greater than theirs, as the crime we commit in rejecting the lawful dominion of our reason is greater than any which they can commit. If after all, you should confess all these things, yet plead the necessity of political institutions, weak and wicked as they are, I can argue with equal, perhaps superior force concerning the necessity of artificial religion; and every step you advance in your argument, you add a strength to mine. So that if we are resolved to submit our reason and our liberty to civil usurpation, we have nothing to do but to conform as quietly as we can to the vulgar notions which are connected with this, and take up the theology of the vulgar as well as their politics. But if we think this necessity rather imaginary than real, we should renounce their dreams of society, together with their visions of religion, and vindicate ourselves into perfect liberty.

You are, my lord, but just entering into the world; I am going out of it. I have played long enough to be heartily tired of the drama. Whether I have acted my part in it well or ill, posterity will judge with more candour than I, or than the present age, with our present passions, can possibly pretend to. For my part, I quit it without a sigh, and submit to the sovereign order without murmuring. The nearer we approach to the goal of life, the better we begin to understand the true value of our existence, and the real weight of our opinions. We set out much in love with both; but we leave much behind us as we advance. We first throw away the tales along with the rattles of our nurses; those of the priest keep their hold a little longer; those of our governors the longest of all. But the passions which prop these opinions are withdrawn one after another; and the cool light of reason at the setting of our life, shows us what a false splendour played upon these objects during our more sanguine seasons. Happy, my lord, if instructed by my experience, and even by my errors, you come early to make such an estimate of things, as may give freedom and ease to your life. I am happy that such an estimate promises me comfort at my death.

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